

Comparison between Sleep Quality and Life Satisfaction in Middle Adulthood

Ms. Kashish Ahuja¹, Dr. Neerja Pandey^{2*}

ABSTRACT

The aim of this review paper is to assess the relationship between life satisfaction and sleep quality in individuals during their middle adulthood. It aims to highlight the overall well-being of individuals in their middle adulthood. Two very important variables, life satisfaction and sleep quality, show how comfortable an individual is in their life and its circumstances and how well rested they are after sleeping, depicted by sleep quality. Middle adulthood is characterized by many responsibilities and worries, from ageing parents to adulting children, making it important to know their overall well-being and satisfaction with life for taking better care of their needs for a more balanced life. Most of the studies conducted on middle adults only talk about factors like physical activity, exercise, depressive or anxiety symptoms along with chronic illnesses as mediating factors in determining the relationship between life satisfaction and sleep quality with growing age from young to middle adulthood. This review puts forward the problem of very few researches on middle adults concerning their sleep quality and quality of life to statistically assess, analyze and conclude relationship between these variables. This review can give rise to a more holistic perspective on creating a better and positive environment for individuals in their middle adulthood for a smoother transition towards old age later in life.

Keywords: *Life Satisfaction, Sleep Quality, Quality of Life, Middle Adulthood, Well-Being*

Life satisfaction and sleep quality is a topic of concern in the present day. Duration of sleep cannot predict the quality of sleep in an individual and being happy on the outside cannot define how satisfied an individual is with their present life. Life satisfaction can be an indicator of mental and physical well-being in individuals, especially in middle adulthood. It is important to assess the quality of sleep, and satisfaction with life in this stage of transition from young adulthood to middle age. This age is characterized by many physical, biological and emotional changes which can affect their general happiness and also alternating their perception towards life. Life satisfaction and sleep quality have a bidirectional relationship. Poor sleep quality can lead to health hazards which can lead to less satisfaction with life in general. Poor sleep quality can also be due to low quality of life leading to poor perception of the outer world making it difficult for individuals to have

¹BA(H)AP, AIBAS, Amity University Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow Campus

²Assistant Professor, AIBAS, Amity University Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow Campus

ORCID Id: 0000-0002-7495-2413

*Corresponding Author

Received: February 24, 2025; Revision Received: March 04, 2025; Accepted: March 08, 2025

Comparison between Sleep Quality and Life Satisfaction in Middle Adulthood

proper sleep, also leading to problems like insomnia. Focus on these variables in middle age can lead to better adjustment, especially during old age.

MIDDLE ADULTHOOD

The field of midlife development is emerging in the context of large demographic shifts in the population. Jung, in his essay “The Stages of Life” has called middle age or midlife as the afternoon of life. Midlife is the period of transition from young adulthood to old age. There are many new and diverse challenges in this stage. Despite many researches on different ages throughout life, there is still much less known about this age than other ages. According to Silvestre et al. (2023), middle adulthood is characterized as the period between ages 40 and 60. This is an age characterized by many degrading physical abilities and hormonal changes. It is also characterized by taking up different social responsibilities, like taking care of elderly parents and also of their children. This time is of taking up financial responsibilities and trying to strike a work-life balance. People at this stage of life can either be living their best life or feel stuck in their responsibilities. Having proper sleep along with a positive outlook towards life leads to better adjustment to these new challenges and responsibilities.

SLEEP

Sleep is a biological need of all individuals for a healthy life. Good quality sleep reduces the chances of accidents or injuries pertaining to sleepiness and fatigue from stressful daily life. Sleeping for proper durations and without any restrictions or problems ensure a good quality sleep for proper functioning. After sleeping, feeling fit and energetic depicts good quality of sleep (Karatay et al. 2016). Sleep quality of individuals have been generally attributed to their perceptions about sleep. Perceptions are mostly made by individuals according to their personality traits. Some objective experiences like difficulties in falling asleep, disturbances during sleep or day long fatigue may also predict the sleep quality of an individual. Sleep quality of an individual has been more closely related to better life satisfaction, productivity, better health, feelings of anger and confusion rather than sleep quantity of an individual. Sleep quantity is the time period for which an individual sleeps in routine, it may be good quality sleep without any problems or disturbances or might not be. For example, there are people who sleep for 7-8 hours but still might feel irritated and sleepy as compared to a person sleeping 4-5 hours a day. Sleep and its concepts like sleep quality and quantity are most commonly influenced by age, socio-economic status and gender of people. Elderly people mostly find it difficult to sleep and may experience more sleep disturbances. Complaints in sleep is prevalent in older adults, mostly associated with psychological or medical conditions (Bloom et al., 2009). It might be due to different diseases, allergies or mental health issues related to ageing. With the emerging health care systems and technological advancements in various health related fields, more research has been inclined towards quality of sleep of individuals predicting various variables like productivity, feelings of discomfort or anger, etc. Sleep quality can be assessed by objective or subjective techniques. Objective techniques might include polysomnography, actigraphy, etc. which measure physical attributes during sleep to assess any sleep disturbances. Subjective or self-report techniques are more related to individual’s perception about their sleep quality or presence of any type of disturbances or problems which hinder their daily routine. Current researches on assessing sleep quality are focused on identifying and quantifying key parameters of sleep quality of an individual. Changes in middle adults can lead to changes in their sleep patterns which can affect their quality of sleep.

LIFE SATISFACTION

Life satisfaction can be explained as the subjective evaluation of an individual's overall well-being and outlook towards life as a whole. It includes emotional, physical and social factors like physical health, relationships, self-concept, etc. According to Mansuri and Barad (2019), life satisfaction is explained as the degree to which an individual positively evaluates their life overall. It can also be defined as an individual's perception of his life as meaningful or not. Low life satisfaction can lead to problems with adjustments and fulfilling responsibilities. 'Life satisfaction' can be referred as to how much someone likes their life (Diener et al., 1998). Many factors are responsible for affecting life satisfaction of an individual. These factors may include demographic factors like gender, age, psychological characteristics, social factors like relationships, family or work, household, self-concept, lifestyle, etc. (Rojas, 2006; Loewe et al., 2014; Moksnes and Espnes, 2013). There are various aspects of life satisfaction like health satisfaction, personal satisfaction, social satisfaction, marital satisfaction, family life satisfaction, economic satisfaction, and job satisfaction. Life satisfaction in middle aged adults might vary from highly satisfied and enjoying their life or feeling the burden of responsibilities leading to low satisfaction. It is the evaluation of one's complete existence- past, present and the future. It evaluates how content you feel when you think about your life in general. Researches have also found differences in life satisfaction with respect to different cultures (Diener and Suh, 2000; Diener and Diener, 2009).

Rationale

After extensive research on different topics, it was concluded that there are very less researches done on the topic 'life satisfaction and sleep quality on individuals in their middle adulthood'. Most of the researches are done on older adults or university students. Interest in this topic acted as motivation to choose these variables for this review paper. Middle age is a time of transition and responsibilities. To ensure a good quality of life during old age, it is necessary to keep an eye on their overall well-being and outlook towards life situations currently during middle age. Deteriorating sleep quality of people in their middle adulthood can lead to various issues including less satisfaction in life, lower work-life balance, etc. Various factors related to these variables are still under researched, specifically in middle aged adults. The aim of this review of literature is to gain deeper insight towards life satisfaction and sleep quality along with their predicting factors, in middle adulthood. Preexisting researches only focus on factors like increasing age, physical activity and exercise and depressive or anxiety symptoms, ignoring other important variables impacting middle adults. An inadequate number of researches talks about difference in life satisfaction between working or non-working women.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section is divided into three parts pertaining to researches done on individuals in their middle adulthood using life satisfaction or sleep quality or both life satisfaction and sleep quality as variables –

1. Research papers on life satisfaction
2. Research papers on sleep quality
3. Research paper on both life satisfaction and sleep quality

Life satisfaction

A study by An et al. (2020), highlighted that life satisfaction increases with age. A total of 2345 adults were included in the study and later divided into three categories- young adults, middle adults and older adults. It was found that physical activity is positively correlated with life satisfaction and happiness in all ages including middle adulthood. It also suggests

Comparison between Sleep Quality and Life Satisfaction in Middle Adulthood

that life satisfaction and happiness significantly increase with age. Research by Yoon et al. (2023), suggested that socioeconomic factors affected life satisfaction in adults over 45 years of age. These factors may include marital status, financial assets and frequency of contact with acquaintances. They conducted a longitudinal study on 124 adults and only 21 of them completed all surveys in the 12-year time gap. They suggest that life satisfaction decreases with increase in chronic illnesses resulting with increasing age. Research study by Eqbal and Sharma (2023), conclude that working or non-working women exhibit no positive relation with their satisfaction with life. It was done on 200 middle aged females divided into four categories- early working women, early non-working women, late working women and late non-working women. 100 women were in their early and remaining in their late middle adulthood. Some factors responsible for low life satisfaction among women according to this study as observed are loneliness, not having an appropriate social image as per expectation, interference by partners in their daily life, no proper daily routine, financial dependency, etc. Study by Anupma and Kumar (2023) suggested that middle aged people who practice yoga have higher levels of life satisfaction. It also suggests that women have higher levels of life satisfaction than males in middle age. 150 middle aged individuals from middle class socioeconomic status were taken from Meerut city for this study. They were divided into groups of 50 considering of 25 males and 25 females in three categories- yoga practitioners, morning walkers and evening walkers. Research done by Yüksel et al. (2023) suggests that life satisfaction is not influenced by factors such as age, gender or educational qualification, rather can be influenced by health or economic situation. It is conducted on 340 volunteer individuals between the age range of 40 to 59 to study if there is any significant relationship between death anxiety, life satisfaction and psychological well-being, including to study the role of age, gender and educational qualifications.

Sleep Quality

According to Yang et al. (2012), they concluded that middle aged and older adults who were subjected to regular exercise programs for 10 to 16 weeks had more Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index score in comparison to individuals who do not exercise regularly. Their systematic review was conducted on 305 participants, 241 of whom were females. According to their analysis, regular exercise did not have any significant effect on sleep duration, sleep efficiency, sleep disturbance, or daytime functioning. According to a study by Koohsari et al. (2023), more physical activity instead of sedentary behaviour was favouring rest by sleep in middle-aged women leading to better quality sleep. They found no significant results in men having more physical activity affecting their sleep. It was conducted on 683 middle aged adults ranging from ages 40 to 64 in Japan. A longitudinal study conducted by Stephan et al. (2017) concluded that increasing subjective age leads to more difficulties in sleeping due to various depressive symptoms, anxiety or chronic illnesses, leading to less quality sleep in middle and older adults. Data was collected in three large groups in 2004-2005 and 2013-2014 from the second and third wave of middle-aged people in the United States Survey, in 2008 and 2014 waves of the Health and Retirement Study and in 2011 and 2014 from the first and fourth waves of the National Health and Aging Trends Survey. Study conducted by Kim et al. (2021), concluded that there is a relationship between age and sleep quality. The study was conducted on 228340 participants of all age groups. They were divided into six age groups to check the association between age and sleep quality. They concluded that sleep quality decreased with increasing age by comparing the scores on Pittsburgh sleep quality index of individuals from different age groups. It may be due to various physical or psychological factors present in individuals with increase in age. A study conducted by Wang et al. (2020) highlighted that worries about the previous day about their adult children can lead to less quality sleep at night which in turn increases their worries the

Comparison between Sleep Quality and Life Satisfaction in Middle Adulthood

next day. Good quality sleep leading to less worry. It was conducted on 633 middle aged adults who had at least one ageing parent a child above 18 years of age along with 248 participants in the daily diary study. 490 participants of the original 633 were reinterviewed five years later along with 191 participants from 248 daily diary study sample were used in their study.

Both Life Satisfaction and Sleep Quality

A study conducted by Yang et al. (2022) suggested that perceived stress and depressive symptoms have a mediating role in the relationship between sleep quality and life satisfaction in middle adults. Their study is based on the analysis that sleep quality and life satisfaction have a positive relationship with each other. It was conducted on data by the Midlife in the United States (MIDUS) Study, 4963 participants of ages 35 to 84 in MIDUS 2 (2004-2006) and 3294 participants from ages 43 to 94 in MIDUS 3 (2013-2014).

CONCLUSION

Life satisfaction and sleep quality is a topic of concern in the present day. Sleeping an adequate amount of time does not define how well someone has slept and being happy on the outside does not define how satisfied an individual is with their present life. It is important to assess the quality of sleep and satisfaction with life in this stage of transition from young adulthood to middle age. According to a study conducted by Ness et al. (2018) on 701 Norwegian university students, a positive relationship was found between good quality sleep and life satisfaction. Quality sleep was found to be a predictor of quality of life. Middle age is considered to be between ages 40 to 60 (Silvestre et al.,2023). It is the age characterized by various physical and hormonal changes along with a lot of responsibilities. At this time, people have their own children who are transitioning towards adulthood and their parents who have grown old in age, along with their job stress. It is an important stage of life which can determine how well adjusted an individual might be later in older age. There are not many researches that talk about life satisfaction and sleep quality in middle adults. Life satisfaction can help know how comfortable and well-adjusted people feel in their current life. According to Diener et al. (1985) sleep quality can be a general indicator of well being of an individual in their life.

Previous researches have presented that life satisfaction and sleep quality have various indicators in middle adults. According to research conducted by An et al. (2020) and Koohsari et al. (2023), physical activity is considered a positive indicator for life satisfaction and sleep quality. It is suggested that individuals who are involved in more physical activity are more likely to have better quality sleep and satisfaction with life. Most of the researches done on middle adults also highlight that sleep quality decreases due to age. It can be due to reasons like chronic illnesses, depressive symptoms, anxiety, perceived stress or worry about their previous day (Stephan et al.,2017; Yang et al., 2022; Wang et al. 2020).

Future Implications

This review puts forward the problem of very few studies on life satisfaction and sleep quality among middle adults. There are not adequate studies that can statistically form an association between life satisfaction and sleep quality among middle adults and measure these variables on individuals in their middle adulthood in a long period of time. Employing a number of qualitative and quantitative methods to provide more statistically reliable proofs for establishing a relationship between life satisfaction, sleep quality and middle adulthood. This can improve the general well being of individuals in their middle adulthood by analysing and formulating better health plans for better adjustment in their old age. This can

Comparison between Sleep Quality and Life Satisfaction in Middle Adulthood

also help in geriatrics, for better prevention of mental health problems in individuals transitioning from middle to older adulthood. It can be instrumental in ensuring a holistically healthy environment for middle adults when they are going through lots of changes in their lives along with work responsibilities.

REFERENCES

- An, H.-Y., Chen, W., Wang, C.-W., Yang, H.-F., Huang, W.-T., & Fan, S.-Y. (2020). The Relationships between Physical Activity and Life Satisfaction and Happiness among Young, Middle-Aged, and Older Adults. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(13), 4817. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17134817>.
- Anupma & Kumar, S. (2023). Impact of Yoga and Gender on Life Satisfaction of Middle Age Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *11*(1), 985-992. DIP:18.01.099.2023 1101, DOI:10.25215/1101.099. <https://ijip.in/articles/impact-of-yoga-and-gender-on-life-satisfaction-of-middle-age-adults/>.
- Aysan, E., Karaköse, S., Zaybak, A., İsmailoğlu, EG (2014). Sleep Quality and Affecting Factors in University Students. *Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Nursing Electronic Journal*, *7*(3), 193-198. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/deuhfed/issue/46807/586974>.
- Bloom, H. G., Ahmed, I., Alessi, C. A., Ancoli-Israel, S., Buysse, D. J., Kryger, M. H., Phillips, B. A., Thorpy, M. J., Vitiello, M. V., & Zee, P. C. (2009). Evidence-based recommendations for the assessment and management of sleep disorders in older persons. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, *57*(5), 761–789. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-5415.2009.02220.x>.
- Diener, E., & Diener, M. (2009). Cross-cultural correlates of life satisfaction and self-esteem. In E. Diener (Ed.), *Culture and well-being*, Social Indicators Research Series. Springer, Dordrecht, Vol. 38. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-2352-0_4.
- Diener, E., and Suh, E. M. (2000). “Measuring subjective well-being to compare the quality of life of cultures” in *Culture and Subjective Well-being* (Cambridge: The MIT Press), 3–12. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/2242.001.0001>.
- Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, *49*(1), 71–75. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4901_13.
- Eqbal, N. & Sharma, A.K. (2023). Life Satisfaction among Middle Aged Women. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *11*(3), 1637-1644. <https://ijip.in/articles/life-satisfaction-among-middle-aged-women/>.
- Karatay, G., Bas, N. G., Aldemir, H., Akay, M., Bayir, M., & Onayli, E. (2016). Examining the sleep habits of nursing department students and the affective factors. *HSP*, *3*(1), 16–22. (In Turkish). <https://archhealthscires.org/en/examining-the-sleep-habits-of-nursing-department-students-and-the-affective-factors-13225>.
- Kim, M., Um, Y.-H., Kim, T.-W., Kim, S.-M., Seo, H.-J., Jeong, J.-H., Lee, J., Kim, S., Cho, I. H., Kim, S.-Y., & Hong, S.-C. (2021). Association between age and sleep quality: Findings from a community health survey. *Sleep Medicine Research*, *12*(2), 155-160. <https://doi.org/10.17241/smr.2021.01158>.
- Koohsari, M. J., Yasunaga, A., McCormack, G. R., Shibata, A., Ishii, K., Liao, Y., Nagai, Y., & Oka, K. (2023). Sedentary behaviour and sleep quality. *Scientific Reports*, *13*(1), 1180. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-27882-z>.
- Loewe, N., Bagherzadeh, M., Araya-Castillo, L., Thieme, C., & Batista-Foguet, J. M. (2014). Life domain satisfactions as predictors of overall life satisfaction among workers: Evidence from Chile. *Social Indicators Research*, *118*(1), 71–86. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-013-0408-6>.
- Mansuri, M. G., & Barad, A. S. (2019). A study of life satisfaction among working and non-working mothers. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *7*(2), 324-331. <https://doi.org/10.25215/0702.039>.

Comparison between Sleep Quality and Life Satisfaction in Middle Adulthood

- Moksnes, U. K., & Espnes, G. A. (2013). Self-esteem and life satisfaction in adolescents—gender and age as potential moderators. *Qual. Life Res.*, 22(22), 2921–2928. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-013-0427-4>.
- Ness, T. E., & Saksvik-Lehouillier, I. (2018). The relationships between life satisfaction and sleep quality, sleep duration, and variability of sleep in university students. *Journal of European Psychology Students*, 9(1), 28–39. <https://doi.org/10.5334/jeps.434>.
- Rojas, M. (2006). Life satisfaction and satisfaction in domains of life: Is it a simple relationship? *J. Happiness Stud.*, 7, 467–497. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9009-2>
- Silvestre, A.A., (2023). Middle Adulthood Perceived Well-Lived Life: A Case Study Approach. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 9(7), 894-899. https://scimatic.org/show_manuscript/1477.
- Stephan, Y., Sutin, A. R., Bayard, S., & Terracciano, A. (2017). Subjective age and sleep in middle-aged and older adults. *Psychology & health*, 32(9), 1140–1151. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2017.1324971>.
- Wang, H., Kim, K., Burr, J. A., Birditt, K. S., & Fingerman, K. L. (2020). Middle-aged adults' daily sleep and worries about aging parents and adult children. *Journal of family psychology: JFP: journal of the Division of Family Psychology of the American Psychological Association (Division 43)*, 34(5), 621–629. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000642>.
- Yang, P.-Y., Ho, K.-H., Chen, H.-C., & Chien, M.-Y. (2012). Exercise training improves sleep quality in middle-aged and older adults with sleep problems: A systematic review. *Journal of Physiotherapy*, 58(3), 157–163. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1836-9553\(12\)70106-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1836-9553(12)70106-6). (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1836955312701066>)
- Yang, Y., Cuffee, Y. L., Aumiller, B. B., Schmitz, K., Almeida, D. M., & Chinchilli, V. M. (2022). Serial mediation roles of perceived stress and depressive symptoms in the association between sleep quality and life satisfaction among middle-aged American adults. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, Article822564. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.822564>. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.822564>.
- Yoon, J., Kim, J., Chung, J., & Son, H. (2023). Changes in life satisfaction among middle-aged adults living alone over a 12-year span. *PloS one*, 18(12), e0295895. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0295895>.
- Yukay Yüksel, M., Serezli, K., & Bostancıoğlu, N. (2024). The Relationship between Death Anxiety, Satisfaction with Life and Psychological Well-Being in Mid-Adulthood. *Spiritual Psychology and Counseling*, 9(1), 57-74. <https://doi.org/10.37898/spiritualpc.1311639>.

Acknowledgment

I am grateful to the institute for providing me with the opportunity to work on and publish the review paper.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Ahuja, K. & Pandey, N. (2025). Comparison between Sleep Quality and Life Satisfaction in Middle Adulthood. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(1), 1693-1699. DIP:18.01.160.20251301, DOI:10.25215/1301.160