Well-Being in Kumaun as Affected by Employment Level, Sex and Age: A Developmental Analysis

Ruchi Kakkar and Aradhana Shukla*

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to find out the pattern of well-being in Kumauni males and females as affected by their employment level and age. 360 males and females in the age range of 30-60 years were considered and arranged according to requirement of 3x2x2 factorial design with their level of employment (High, middle and low) two levels of gender (male and female) and two level of chronological age (30-45 and 46-60) i.e., 30 Ss per cell. Swasti Mapani (Kakkar & Shukla, 2006) was used as the measure and it was used twice for measuring personal and social well-being. Data collection was done individually/in group and best attempts were made to avoid external distractions.

Findings of the study indicate that level of employment showed its impact and it was found that the magnitude of well-being varied with variation in the level of employment. The magnitude of discrepancy of well-being was less influenced by age and gender but the pattern of personal and social well-being was almost the same.

Key Words: Well-being, Employment level, Sex, Age.

The pursuits of health and happiness or subjective well-being are central to human experience. Not surprisingly, therefore subjective well-being and subjective physical health are popular topics of psychological researches. Questions concerning the personal characteristics and contextual factors that predict global and domain specific subjective well-being are central in that line of research.

In the context of bottom-up and top-down models of subjective well-being three main sources are discussed; socio-structural; characteristics

* Department of Psychology, Kumaun University Campus, Almora.
personality traits and self regulatory indicators (e.g. Brief, Butcher, George and Link 1993; Costa et al. 1987; Diener 1994; Ryff 1989; Smith, et al., 1999; Staudinger and Fleeson, 1996). Further life span theory argues that socio structural characteristics as well as psychological characteristics might take on different functions and therefore show different effects depending on the larger cultural context in which they are embedded (e.g. Baltes, Lindenberger and Staudinger 1998). Such inter and intra-cultural variability in predictive relationships, however is a topic that with some exceptions has only recently received attention (e.g. Andrews & Inglehart 1979; Davis and Fine, 1991; Diener, Diener and Diener 1995; Diener and Diener 1995; Grob, Little Wanner, Wearing and Euronet 1996; Lee, Kim, Shin 1982; Near and Rechner 1993; Suh, Diener, Oishi and Triandis, 1998).

The aim of this study was to find out the pattern of well-being in the Kumaun society as affected by employment level, sex and age. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the impact of employment level on well-being.
2. To find out the relative efficacy of sex on well-being.
3. To find out the effect of age on well-being.

**METHOD**

**Sample**

Three hundred sixty Kumauni nationals were taken in consideration and were arranged according to the requirements of 3 x 2 x 2 mixed model factorial design with three levels of employment (High level, middle level and low level employment), two levels of sex (males, females) and two levels of chronological age (30-45 and 45-60 years). The design is given in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
<th>Systematic Presentation of Experimental Design</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>A2</td>
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<td>B1</td>
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<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Legends:

A Level of Employment
   A1 High Level of Employment
   A2 Middle Level of Employment
   A3 Low Level of Employment

B SEX
   B1 Male
   B2 Female

C Chronological Age
   C1 30-45 Yrs.
   C2 45-60 Yrs.

Tools

_Swasti Mapani_: This test was designed by Kakkar and Shukla, 2006. It was constructed of 110 adjectives which are found in people. The aim was to find out the presence of these attributes in them as well as in others so, the participants were tested twice _i.e._ for their own perception their perception of others. It was thought that mentally healthy person will see good qualities not only in his ownself but also in the society. It is the ground of well-being that a person would be positive not only for him but also for the society. Split half reliability of this test is .74 and test-retest reliability is .79.

Procedure

Data collection was done individually and best attempts were made to avoid external hazards.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Obtained findings were analysed by three way analysis of variance and interpreted in terms of personal and social well-being as affected by level of employment, sex and age. In this study two measures related with personal and social well-being (one in each) were taken and they were analysed separately. Findings are mentioned below.

1. **Impact of level of employment, sex and age on social well-being:** Obtained findings were analysed by three way analysis of variance and interpreted in terms of level of employment, sex and age on effect of personal well-being. Findings are presented in table 2. A close perusal of the table indicates that the pattern of level of employment was significant (F 2,348=.19 P>.05). Mean values pooled across gender and age were: 342.30, 346.97 and 325.20 for high middle and low jobs, respectively. It was noticed that the magnitude of personal well-being was more or less similar in all groups. The
next main effect of sex was insignificant (F, 1.348=1.17 P>.05) Mean value pooled across level of employment and chronological age were 339.73 and 336.58 for males and females. The third main effect of age was significant (F, 1.348=4.13 P< .05) and it revealed that older Ss had more sense of well-being (M=343.10) than young participants (M=336.55). The level of employment x sex interaction was significant (F, 2.348=6.71 P<.05) and it is revealed. A close perusal of the figure reveals that level of employment and sex yielded significant impact of personal well-being. The level of employment x age interaction (F, 2.348=6.59 P<.01) was significant. A close perusal the figure reveals that personal well-being was highly influenced by level of employment and sex. The sex x age interaction was also significant (F, 1.348=4.36 P<.05).

TABLE 2
Summary table of analysis of variance showing the impact of level of employment, sex and age on social well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>16.99</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.49</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>16.68</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.39</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>19.72</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.86</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>440.51</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>359</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three way interaction of level of employment x sex x chronological age was significant. (F, 2.348=7.79 P<.01).

Figure revealed that all variables in sum laid their impact on personal well-being.

2. Impact of level of employment, sex and age on personal Well-being: Just like previous analysis data were also subjected to analysis of variance and the findings given in table 3. A close perusal of the table reveals that the main effect of employment was significant (F
Mean value pooled across sex and age were 379.25, 383.60 and 35.17, respectively for high middle and low level of employment. The next main effect of sex was insignificant (F(1, 348)=1.01 P>.05) and it revealed that the pattern of personal well-being was more or less same in males (371.36) and females (373.31). The main effect of age was also insignificant (F, 1.348=1.12 P>.05). The level of employment x sex interaction was significant (F2, 348=9.11 P <.01).

**TABLE 3**

Summary table of analysis of variance showing the impact of level of employment, sex and age on personal well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>21.38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.68</td>
<td>7.91</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>24.62</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.31</td>
<td>9.11</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>19.38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>7.17</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>23.76</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.88</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>440.50</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A close perusal of the figure reveals that both variables laid their impact on personal well-being. The level of employment x age interaction was also significant (F2, 348=7.17 P<.01). The sex x age interaction was unable to yield its impact on social well-being (F(1, 348)=1.27 P>.05). However, the three way interaction of level of employment x sex x age was highly significant (F2, 348=8.79 P<.01). It showed that all variable in sum, laid their impact on social well-being.

3. **Comparison of personal and Social well-being**: The last endeavour of this study was to find out the comparison between personal and social well-being. Findings are presented in the table 4.
Table shows that mean values of personal and social well-being were almost similar. Findings in sum were as follows:

- Level of employment showed its impact and it was found that the magnitude of well-being varied with variation in the level of employment.
- The magnitude of discrepancy of well-being was less influenced by age and sex.
- The pattern of personal and social well-being was almost the same.

Obtained findings were analysed by variance and interpreted in terms of levels of employment, age and sex as factors affecting well-being.

**Variation in the levels of employment would cause variation in the level of well-being:** Our first and foremost concern was related to the pattern of well-being as caused by variation in the levels of employment. It was found that the magnitude of well-being was influenced by the levels of employment.

The concept of job involvement has received considerable attention in occupation psychology. Job involvement is defined as the degree to which one identifies with one’s present job (Kanungo, 1982; Lawler & Hall, 1970). The question is how job involvement is related to mental well-being. Well-being is a multifaceted and value laden concept (Campbell, 1976; Jahoda, 1958) but its primary indicator is its affective level and quality, in terms of positive effect (e.g., feelings of happiness, satisfaction high self-esteem) and findings of distress (e.g., anxiety, depression, sense of hopelessness; Warr, 1987.) The lack of attention paid to the relationship between job involvement and well-

**TABLE 4**

Mean value of Personal and Social well-being in participants

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>A1</th>
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<th>A2</th>
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<th>A3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**C1 (30-45 yrs)**

P.W.B  336.71  336.90  416.69  417.66  319.16  321.21
S.W.B  380.19  391.52  426.69  416.51  346.64  351.50

**C2 (46-60 yrs)**

P.W.B  380.38  409.99  379.70  368.21  340.19  342.00
S.W.B  370.61  401.59  326.71  316.21  330.10  333.18
being is unfortunate, in view of the interest otherwise focused on well-being for example, on stress as a correlate of work experiences.

Researchers testing the relationship between job involvement and well-being have not considered whether the results depended on the reasons underlying job involvement. The degree of each person’s job involvement is related to numerous personal and situational characteristics, such as age, nature of work and it’s ethics and other specific job factors. A part of the variance of involvement is also caused by the congruence between a person’s needs and the characteristics of the job- that is, by how well the job fulfills the individual’s needs (Rabinowiz & Hall, 1977). Due to these different reasons for job involvement, need fulfillment most closely relates to a known basis for well-being too. Thus, for example, Diener, Larsen and Emmons 1984 found that people are happier if their needs are fulfilled as a result of congruence between the needs and the environment and less happy if such congruence is missing. Need fulfillment as a basis for well-being is also emphasised by the telic or endpoint theories (Diener, 1984). These theories postulate that satisfaction of needs causes happiness and the persistence of unfulfilled needs causes unhappiness (Wilson, 1960) and people are consistent by seeking fulfillment of needs to reach happiness (Michalos, 1990).

The relation between job involvement and well-being may also be confounded by job satisfaction, a “positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job experiences” (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction may contribute to well-being (Warr, 1987), and a high level of satisfaction does not necessarily signify a high level of involvement (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977).

Campbell et al. (1976) found that unemployed people were the unhappiest group, even when income differences were controlled. This suggests that unemployment has a devastating impact on the SWB for many persons that go beyond the obvious financial difficulties involved, Catalano and Dooley (1977) have shown that regional unemployment rates are strong longitudinal predictors of mood. Bradburn reported evidence that unemployment influences the well-being of both men and women. However, it does not appear that homemakers are less happy then those who work in salaried jobs (Wright, 1978). Job satisfaction appears to be related to SWB. However, this literature is voluminous, and the reader is referred to several excellent sources; (Near Rice & Hunt, 1978, 1980; Near & Rechner, 1993).

In this way it is apparent that well-being is determined by levels of employment, sex and age.
Sex variation would influence well-being: A large body of empirical work shows that women’s role involvements affect their psychological well-being (see, e.g., Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Baruch & Barnett, 1986; Crosby, 1983; Epstein, 1983; Gerson, 1985; Helson, Elliot & Leigh, 1990; Reifman, Biernat & Lang, 1991; Thoits, 1983; Verbrugge, 1982, 1983). Although the source of this relationship remains contested, examination of women’s role involvements and well-being do converge in one respect: They generally ignore the importance of personality development in predicting women’s well-being. Very few, if any, of the major studies in this area have included personality variables in their designs.

Findings for both women and men tend to show positive relationship between the number of roles a person occupies and various indexes of psychological well-being (Barnett & Marshall, 1991; Crosby, 1987; Epstein, 1983; Rodin & Lackovies, 1990; Thoits, 1983; Verbrugge, 1982). Although these results have claimed that there is growing evidence to support the enhancement hypothesis rather then the scarcity hypothesis (Brunch & Barnett, 1986; Crosby, 1987; Hirsch & Rapkin, 1986). The notion of role conflict, strain or overload remains a strong presence in the research on women’s well-being (Burke, 1988; Greenhouse, 1988; Poole & Langan-Fox, 1992; Reifman et al., 1991). Much of this research continues to assume that work and family roles are inherently conflictual particularly for women also, women report more negative effect, they also seem to experience greater joys (Braun, 1977; Cameron, 1975; Gurin et al., 1960), so that little differences in global happiness or satisfaction is usually found between the sexes (Campbell et al., 1976; Goodstein, Zautra & Goodhart, 1982; Gurin et al., 1960; Palmore & Kivett, 1977; Sauer 1977; Toseland & Rasch, 1979-1980). Nevertheless three studies have reported a modest interaction with age. It appears that younger women are happier than younger men, and older women are less happy then older men (Medley, 1980); Spreizer & Snyder, 1974). Although this crossover appears to occur around age 45, the difference between the sexes is meager.

Our developmental model of well-being suggests that early role experiences may shape personality, which in turn shapes later role experiences, which in turn lay the basis for satisfying middle years. Perhaps occupying multiple roles in early adulthood permits an individual to develop a well-integrated identity because the need to balance many demands requires an articulation of self in order to maintain distinct and potentially conflicting roles. The increasing normative combination of family and work roles for this cohort might have conferred social validation, which may also have enhanced identity formation. Alternatively, perhaps those women who were able to manage
multiple roles early on these cohorts were those with already clearly defined identities.

The results also suggested that identity development facilitated further personality development (i.e. generativity). This finding is both predicted by and provides support for Erikson’s (1968) notion of the importance of the sequencing of personality achievements. Moreover, Del Laam and MacDermid (1995) found empirical evidence for the same sequence in another sample of midlife women. Finally, Erikson (1963) claimed that generativity should be a prominent concern of midlife adults if they are to continue in their personality development. Our result indicates that Erikson may have been right, because midlife generativity provided a basis for well-being in both samples.

**Variation in age would cause variation in the level of well-being:**

Our last notion was concerned with the impact of age on well-being. It was found that older participants had higher sense of well-being as compared to younger children.

Early studies found that young people were happier than old (Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965; Gurin, Veroff & Feld, 1960; Kuhlen, 1948; Wessman, 1957. In back years, however, a number of researches have found virtually no age effects. (Alston et al., 1974; Cameron, 1975; Sauer, 1977; Spreitzer & Snyder, 1974), and several more have found a positive correlation between age and satisfaction (Bortner & Hultsch, 1970; Cantril, 1965; Clemente & Sauer, 1976a; Medley, 1980). Braun (1977) found that the younger respondents reported stronger levels of both positive and negative levels of overall happiness. Given the confusing nature of the findings, Adams (1971) wrote that “the inconsistency of findings in regards to chronological age indicates that it is, at best, a very gross index of group characteristics” (p. 67). In support of this, a meta-analysis of studies conducted prior to 1980 revealed that the correlation between age and SWB was near zero, regardless of whether other variables were controlled.

There are a number of considerations to keep in mind when trying to understand these findings. First some studies such as those reviewed by Larson (1978) use narrow age ranges, so that the correlation only reflect the ups and downs within those years. Second, most studies have not controlled for other factors that tend to covary with age (Cameron, 1975). Third, the large-scale studies have been cross-sectional, not longitudinal and therefore may reflect cohort differences, not age differences (Knapp, 1976). Finally, the differences may reflect differences in the constructs being measured. Campbell et al. (1976) reported that satisfaction and their index of general well-being correlated positively with age, whereas reports of being very happy decreased...
with age. Campbell et al. (1976) found that older persons reported greater satisfaction in every domain except physical health. Most results have shown a slow rise in satisfaction with age, but it seems that positive and negative affects are experienced more intensely by the young. Thus, young persons appear to experience higher levels of joy, but older persons tend to judge their lives in more positive ways. In recent years investigators have begun to focus not so much on age per se but on life cycle patterns (Estes & Willensky, 1978; Harry, 1976; Medley, 1980).

In this way it is apparent that well-being is influenced by level of employment, sex and age.

REFERENCES


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Vol. 2, No. 1, September, 2007
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