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# Life Satisfaction among College Students in Relation to Family and Food

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***Abstract:*** ***Overall life satisfaction of college students depends on numerous domains. This study analyzes two of these domains specifically, family life satisfaction and food-related satisfaction in relation to overall life satisfaction of Indian college students. Moreover, the differences in these domains among migrated and non-migrated students were analyzed. Three separate scales, namely, Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), Satisfaction With Food-related Life Scale and the Family Satisfaction Scale were used to assess the relationship between the variables. Sample included 148 college going students in India, belonging to the age group of 18-25. Results suggested a positive relationship between family and overall life satisfaction of students. No significant relationship was found between food-related and overall life satisfaction. Food-related satisfaction of non-migrated students was found to be higher than migrated students. No difference was found between overall and family satisfaction among migrated and non-migrated students.***

***Keywords: Life Satisfaction, Family Satisfaction, Food-related Satisfaction, College, Migration***

## I. INTRODUCTION

A person's cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life is known as subjective well-being (Albuquerque, 2017). It involves people experiencing and gauging their lives through different, specific domains and activities. Here, the cognitive element points out to what individuals think about their life satisfaction in a global or as a whole, and in a specific domain sense such as relationships. The affective element, on the other hand, points towards emotions, moods and feelings, which can be positive as well as negative. Subjective well-being comprises life satisfaction, which can be thought of as the cognitive component of this broader construct (Sousa & Lyubomirsky, 2001). The bottom-up perspective supposes that an individual's overall life satisfaction relies upon his or her life satisfaction in different domains of life, such as family, work, leisure, etc. (Headey, 2014). According to the spillover model, satisfaction in one domain of life can positively influence the other domains of life, and overall life satisfaction as well (Schnettler et al., 2020). It means that satisfaction in one domain spills over into other domains, as well as overall life.

The objective of this paper is to study two specific domains, namely, family and food, in relation to life satisfaction of college students. Students go through many changes in their personal, social, academic and other areas of life. Many students may migrate to different cities for their education as well. In such cases, their family and food related life may change drastically. This study concentrates on how the domains of family and food affect the overall life satisfaction of college students. Research findings have suggested a positive relation between food-related satisfaction and overall life satisfaction, and also family-related satisfaction and overall life satisfaction. Although, the relation found between family satisfaction and overall life satisfaction is greater than the relation found between food-related satisfaction and overall satisfaction (Schnettler et al., 2017). Moreover, research has also shown a negative impact of migration on life satisfaction of students (Benita, 2020). This study also aims to find out whether the overall life satisfaction of non-migrated college students is higher than that of migrated college students. Little is known about this topic concerning the Indian population. This particular study aims to broaden the research on this topic in the Indian context.

An individual's conscious cognitive judgment of their family life is called family satisfaction, the criteria for which are up to the individual (Zabriskie & Ward, 2013). Research has shown that there is a significant relationship between family satisfaction and psychological well-being of individuals (Bharathi & Arun, 2021). Research also suggests that family relationships are among the most important sources of life satisfaction for college students (Schimmack et al., 2002). Therefore, this research study strives to investigate the relation between family satisfaction and overall life satisfaction in college students.

An individual's overall assessment regarding his or her food and eating habits is what is meant by Satisfaction with food-related life (Grunert et al., 2007). Research has shown that quality of diet is associated with satisfaction with food-related life, which, in-turn is associated with life satisfaction in adolescents (Schnettler et al., 2022). Migrated college students have to, socially and culturally, adapt to new environments and they often face a loss of their traditional food choices as well as their dietary practices. Many migrating students have also reported a decline in the quality of food they consume (Mishra & Anand, 2020).

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This study endeavors to assess whether satisfaction with food-related life is associated with overall life satisfaction of college students, and also to find out whether there is any significant difference between overall life satisfaction, food-related satisfaction and family satisfaction of migrated and non-migrated college students.

## II. METHOD

### A. *Objectives*

1) To study the relationship between family life satisfaction and overall life satisfaction of college students in India.
2) To study the relationship between food-related satisfaction and overall life satisfaction of college students in India.
3) To study whether there is a significant difference between the life satisfaction of migrated students and non-migrated students.
4) To study whether there is a significant difference between the food-related satisfaction of migrated students and non-migrated students.
5) To study whether there is a significant difference between the family satisfaction of migrated students and non-migrated students.

### B. *Hypotheses*

1) H1: There is a positive relationship between family life satisfaction and overall life satisfaction of college students.
2) H2: There is a positive relationship between food-related satisfaction and overall life satisfaction of college students.
3) H3: Non-migrated students have a higher overall life satisfaction than migrated students.
4) H4: Non migrated students have a higher food related satisfaction than migrated students
5) H5: Non migrated students have a higher family satisfaction than migrated students

### C. *Sample*

The sample included individuals from the age group of 18 to 25 years old, college students who have either migrated to another city for their education, or who have not migrated and live with their families in their homes. This study focuses on the Indian population, therefore only individuals pursuing their studies in India were chosen to be a part of this study. Consent to participate in the study was also obtained from the participants.

### D. *Inclusion Criteria*

Individuals belonging to the age group of 18-25.
Individuals who are currently studying in college.
Individuals who are pursuing their studies in India.
Individuals who are willing to participate in the study.
A total of 155 individuals participated in this study. Among these, 6 of the participants' results were excluded for not pertaining to the inclusion criteria. In the end, the sample size was found to be 148.

## III. TOOLS

Three tools were used to assess the relationship of family satisfaction with overall life satisfaction and food related satisfaction with overall life satisfaction of college students. The questionnaire consisted of a total of 29 statements from all three scales. Furthermore, questions pertaining to socio demographic factors such as age, gender, native place/hometown, and the current place of residence were added.

1) Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985), is a 5-item scale designed to measure the comprehensive cognitive judgements of an individuals' overall life satisfaction. On a 7-point Likert scale, participants indicate how much they agree or disagree on each one of the five items. 1 indicates strongly disagree, 2 indicates agree, 3 indicates slightly disagree, 4 indicates neither agree nor disagree, 5 indicates slightly agree, 6 indicates agree, and finally, 7 indicates strongly agree. Scoring is done by summing up all the scores from each item. The final scores can range from 5 to 35 With lower scores being associated with dissatisfaction with life, and higher scores being associated with satisfaction with life. The test has a Cronbach alpha ranging from .80 to .90 with a significantly positive correlation between the items.
2) Satisfaction with food-related life scale (SWFL) given by Grunert et al. (2007), is a scale consisting of 5 items which measures one particular domain of life satisfaction, food. The degree of agreement with each statement is indicated by the participants on a 6-level Likert scale.

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1 indicates completely disagree, 2 indicates mostly disagree, 3 indicates slightly disagree, 4 indicates slightly agree, 5 indicates mostly agree, and lastly, 6 indicates completely agree. The sum of scores on all 5 items forms the final score for the scale, which can range from 5 to 30. Higher scores on this particular scale indicate higher levels of satisfaction with food related life of individuals. This test has a Cronbach alpha value of 0.852. The SWLS and the SWFL scales have a good convergent validity with a Pearson correlation of 0.53 at a 0.001 level (Schnettler et al., 2013).

*3)* The Family Satisfaction Scale by Carver and Jones (1992) is a 19-item scale measuring an individuals' satisfaction with their family life. Individuals respond on a 5-point likert scale where 1 suggests strongly agree and 5 suggests strongly disagree. 8 items on the scale are reverse scored. Internal consistency evaluated among college students yielded a coefficient alpha of 0.95. Test- retest reliability correlation among college students for this particular scale was 0.88 with $p < 0.01$.

## IV. STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

Pearson Correlation was used to evaluate the relationship between the variables, life satisfaction, food related satisfaction and family satisfaction. Independent samples t-test was used to identify the differences between migrated and non-migrated participants. IBM SPSS 25 was used to analyze data and interpret the results of this study.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research primarily intended to study the relationship between life satisfaction of college going students in the Indian population with their food and family related satisfaction. Furthermore, it also studied the differences in overall life satisfaction, food related satisfaction and family life satisfaction among migrated and non migrated college students. Data was gathered from the participants, logged into Microsoft Excel and was analyzed using IBM SPSS 25.

The total number of responses or n is 148. The Mean and Standard Deviation score obtained of overall life satisfaction is 19.24 and 6.52; for food related life satisfaction is 23.13 and 5.65; and for family life satisfaction 45.55 and 13.24 respectively.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study Variables

| Variable | N | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall Life Satisfaction | 148 | 19.24 | 6.52 | - | | |
| Food Related Satisfaction | 148 | 23.13 | 5.65 | -.062 | - | |
| Family Life Satisfaction | 148 | 45.55 | 13.24 | .320** | -.178* | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Correlation was measured using Pearson's correlation with significance values of 0.01 and 0.05 significance levels. Based on the results displayed on the table above, there was no correlation found between overall life satisfaction and food related life satisfaction based on the coefficient value of -.062. A positive relationship was identified between overall life satisfaction and family life satisfaction at .320 being significant at the 0.01 significance level. A negative relationship was found between family life satisfaction and food related satisfaction at -.178 being significant at 0.05 significance level.

The first hypothesis states that there is a positive relationship between overall life satisfaction and family life satisfaction of college students. Based on the results that were obtained, the first hypothesis has been accepted. There is a weak positive relationship between overall life satisfaction and family life satisfaction of college students. Increased family life satisfaction leads to an increase in the overall life satisfaction of college students. These findings are consistent with the findings of previous research done by Schnettler et al. (2017), which also confirmed a positive relationship between family life satisfaction and overall life satisfaction of college students.

The second hypothesis proposes that there exists a positive relationship between food related satisfaction and overall life satisfaction. The findings of this research convey that there is no significant relationship between food related satisfaction and overall life satisfaction of college students. Based on these results, the second hypothesis has been rejected. The findings suggest that food related satisfaction is not significantly associated with overall life satisfaction of college students.

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These findings contradict findings from previous research, which suggested a positive relationship between food related satisfaction and overall life satisfaction (Schnettler et al., 2017).

Table 2
Differences between Migrated and Non-Migrated populations among variables

| Variables | Migrated | | Non Migrated | | t | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M | SD | M | SD | | |
| Overall Life Satisfaction | 19.73 | 6.352 | 18.64 | 6.726 | 1.009 | .315 |
| Food Related Satisfaction | 22.07 | 5.694 | 24.40 | 5.377 | 2.540 | .012 |
| Family Life Satisfaction | 57.40 | 10.119 | 57.58 | 8.782 | .119 | .906 |

Table 2 discusses the differences between migrated and non-migrated participants in terms of overall life satisfaction, food related satisfaction and family life satisfaction.

The third hypothesis states that non-migrated students have a higher overall life satisfaction than migrated students. The findings prove the lack of any differences between the migrated and non-migrated population for overall life satisfaction (p =.315). As such the third hypothesis has been rejected. No significant difference exists between the overall life satisfaction of non-migrated college students and that of migrated college students. These findings contradict the findings of previous research done by Benita (2020), which indicated lower levels of overall life satisfaction among migrated college students in comparison to that of non-migrated college students.

The fourth hypothesis proposes that non migrated college students have a higher food related satisfaction than migrated college students.The findings indicate that there exists a significant difference between migrated and non migrated participants regarding food-related satisfaction (p =.012). As such the fourth hypothesis is accepted. Non migrated college students have shown an increased food related satisfaction in comparison to the food related satisfaction of migrated college students. Previous research has shown that migrated college students report a decline in the quality of the food consumed by them (Mishra & Anand, 2020), which can lead to decreased levels of food related satisfaction in migrated college students. The dietary diversity or the quality of food consumed is reported to be higher before migrating (Mishra & Anand, 2020). This explains the higher food related satisfaction of non migrated students as compared to migrated students.

The fifth hypothesis states that non-migrated students have a higher family life satisfaction than migrated students. The results show a lack of differences between the migrated and non-migrated population for family life satisfaction (p = .906). As such the fifth hypothesis has been rejected. No significant difference was found between the family life satisfaction of migrated college students and that of non migrated college students.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The objective of this research was to study the relationship between overall life satisfaction with food-related satisfaction and family life satisfaction among college students in India. It also aimed to analyze the differences between the variables, namely overall life satisfaction, food related satisfaction and family satisfaction among migrated and non-migrated college students. Five hypotheses were generated to study the objectives of this study. Correlational analysis was done to assess the relationship between the variables. Additionally the differences between variables, overall life satisfaction, food-related satisfaction and family satisfaction of migrated students and non migrated students were also analyzed. According to the results of this study, the first and the fourth hypotheses have been accepted. And the second, third and fifth hypotheses stand rejected.

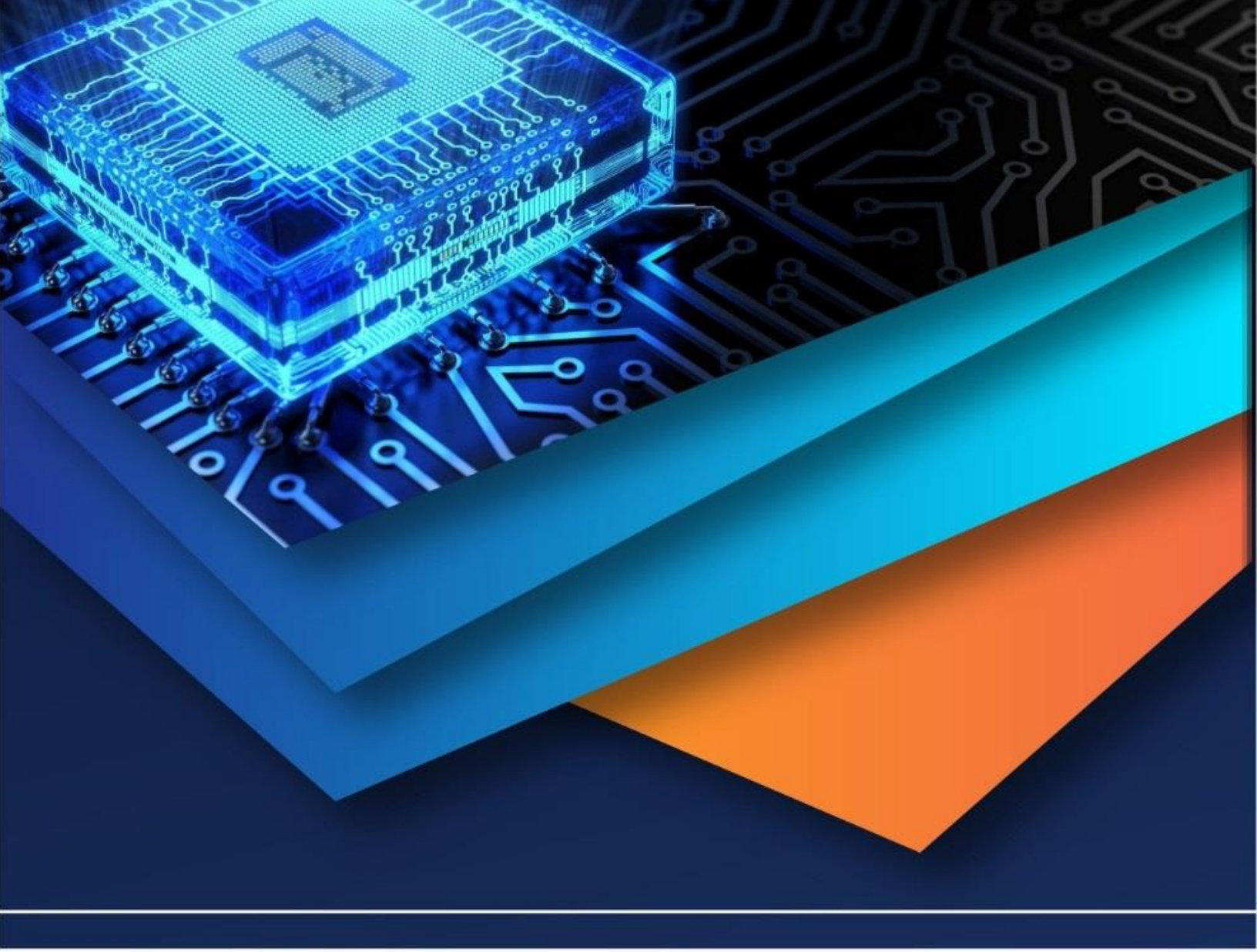
A positive relationship was found between family life satisfaction and overall life satisfaction of college students, strengthening previous research findings which suggested the same. Family relationships are a great source of support for college students and a higher family life satisfaction will lead to higher overall life satisfaction of college students. It was also found that non-migrated college students have a higher food related satisfaction than migrated students.

Migration often forces people to give up on their traditional food choices and culinary practices. Due to the wide diversity of food practices found in India, migration can lead to a decrease in the food-related satisfaction of people. Migrated college students have a lower food-related satisfaction than that of non-migrated college students as migrated students have to adapt to new food practices, while non-migrated students enjoy their traditional food practices. No significant relationship was found between food-related satisfaction and overall life satisfaction of college students. There is no significant difference between the overall life satisfaction of migrated and non-migrated students. No significant difference was found between the family life satisfaction of migrated and non-migrated college students. Further research is needed to be done with a larger sample size to strengthen the findings of this study.

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