

A Comparative Study of Life Satisfaction between Married and Unmarried Corporate Employees with More Than Ten Years of Organizational Tenure

Mr. Debadeep Shani

Ex-Student, M.A. in Psychology, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU),
West Bengal, India

Abstract

This study investigates differences in life satisfaction between married and unmarried corporate employees with more than ten years of organizational tenure. Although workplace well-being has been widely studied, limited research has examined how marital status interacts with prolonged corporate employment to influence global life satisfaction. Grounded in **Social Role Theory** and **Work–Family Enrichment Theory**, this study hypothesizes that married employees will report higher life satisfaction and that marital status will remain a significant predictor after controlling for age, gender, and income. A sample of 300 long-tenured corporate professionals was assessed using **Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)** through **Stratified Random Sampling** technique. Confirmatory Factor Analysis supported construct validity (**CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.045**). **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)** indicated good model fit (**CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.041**), with marital status significantly predicting life satisfaction (**$\beta = 0.46, p < 0.001$**). The model explained 22% of the variance in life satisfaction, with stronger explanatory power among married employees ($R^2 = 0.32$) compared to unmarried employees ($R^2 = 0.24$). The result of the study reflects that marital status significantly influences life satisfaction among long-tenured corporate employees. The study contributes to understanding the intersection of personal and professional life domains within organizational psychology.

Keywords: Life Satisfaction; Marital Status; Organizational Tenure; Structural Equation Modeling; Occupational Well-Being

1. Introduction

Life satisfaction represents a core component of subjective well-being and reflects an individual's cognitive evaluation of overall life quality. Within organizational psychology, significant emphasis has been placed on job satisfaction, engagement, and burnout; however, global life satisfaction remains comparatively underexplored in corporate contexts. The distinction between job satisfaction and life satisfaction is critical, as the latter captures a broader assessment beyond occupational experiences and includes personal, relational, and social domains.

Marital status is one of the most frequently studied social determinants of well-being. A large body of sociological and psychological literature suggests that married individuals often report higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction compared to unmarried counterparts. Marriage may provide emotional companionship, social integration, economic stability, and identity reinforcement. However, corporate employment characterized by long tenure may introduce competing demands, including work-family conflict, occupational stress, and role strain.

Employees with more than ten years of organizational tenure represent a unique population. Long tenure may indicate career stability, financial security, and professional identity consolidation. Simultaneously, prolonged exposure to corporate pressures may reduce well-being if adequate support systems are lacking. The interaction between marital status and extended corporate tenure remains insufficiently investigated.

This study addresses this gap by examining differences in life satisfaction between married and unmarried corporate employees with long organizational tenure. Furthermore, it investigates whether marital status remains a significant predictor of life satisfaction after controlling for demographic variables and whether structural relationships differ across marital groups.

1.1 Specific Objectives of the Study

- I. To compare the levels of Life Satisfaction between married and unmarried employees;
- II. To evaluate the independent contribution of marital status in predicting Life Satisfaction after accounting for demographic variables (age, gender, and income);
- III. To examine group-based structural invariance in the proposed Life Satisfaction model across marital status categories.

1.2 Hypothesis of the Study

- H₁: Married employees report significantly higher **Life Satisfaction** than unmarried employees.
H₂: Marital status significantly predicts **Life Satisfaction** after controlling for age, gender, and income.
H₃: Structural relationships differ between married and unmarried groups.

2. Operational Definitions of the Variables

2.1 Life Satisfaction

Life Satisfaction is operationally defined as an individual's global cognitive evaluation of the overall quality of his or her life according to self-selected criteria. It reflects a conscious, judgment-based appraisal rather than momentary emotional states (**Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985**). Life satisfaction represents the cognitive component of subjective well-being and is conceptually distinct from affective experiences such as positive or negative emotions (**Diener, 1984**).

2.2 Marital Status

Marital status is operationally defined as the legally recognized relational status of the respondent at the time of data collection. Participants are categorized into two groups:

- **Married** (currently legally married and living with spouse), and
- **Unmarried** (never married, divorced, separated, or widowed).

For statistical analysis, marital status is treated as a categorical independent variable and dummy-coded (0 = Unmarried, 1 = Married). Group comparisons and predictive analyses are conducted to examine differences in life satisfaction across marital status categories.

2.3 Organizational Tenure

Organizational tenure is operationally defined as the total number of years an employee has continuously worked within the same organization. Tenure is measured through self-report and recorded in completed years of service.

In the present study, only employees with **more than ten years of continuous organizational tenure** are included in the sample to ensure homogeneity in career stage and employment stability. Tenure is treated as:

- A continuous control variable (years of service), and/or
- A grouping criterion (≥ 10 years) depending on the analytical model applied.

2.4 Life Satisfaction in Organizational Contexts

Life satisfaction has been conceptualized as a cognitive judgmental process whereby individuals compare their life circumstances to self-imposed standards. In organizational settings, life satisfaction is associated with productivity, reduced turnover intentions, and psychological resilience. Research suggests that occupational stability, financial security, and perceived organizational support contribute positively to life satisfaction.

2.4.1 Theoretical Framework

A short description on theoretical framework of the study is reported herewith.

2.4.1.1 Social Role Theory

Social Role Theory (**Eagly, 1987**) provides a theoretical lens through which marital differences in well-being may be understood. The theory posits that socially defined roles confer meaning, identity, and behavioral expectations that structure individual experiences. Marriage, as a socially institutionalized role, may enhance psychological stability and life coherence. Marriage represents a culturally valued role that may strengthen self-concept and social belonging. Individuals occupying marital roles often receive greater social validation and support, which may buffer stress and enhance life satisfaction.

2.4.1.2 Work–Family Enrichment Theory

Work–Family Enrichment Theory provides a resource-based perspective on the interface between professional and personal life domains. Unlike conflict-based models that emphasize strain and role incompatibility, enrichment theory proposes that participation in multiple roles can generate positive spillover effects (**Greenhaus & Powell, 2006**). Specifically, resources gained in one domain – such as skills, positive effect, income, social capital, and psychological resilience – can improve performance and well-being in the other domain.

Empirical evidence supports the enrichment perspective, demonstrating that work-to-family and family-to-work enrichment are positively associated with job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and overall psychological well-being (**Wayne, Grzywacz, Carlson, & Kacmar, 2007**). Enrichment is particularly likely when individuals experience supportive work environments, role clarity, and autonomy, and relational stability – conditions often associated with extended organizational tenure.

3. Review of Allied Literature

A short description on review of allied literature has been presented herewith.

3.1 Life Satisfaction and Subjective Well-Being

Life satisfaction constitutes the cognitive-judgmental component of Subjective Well-Being (SWB), distinct from affective states such as positive and negative emotions (**Diener, 1984**). It reflects a conscious appraisal of life circumstances relative to self-imposed standards. Research has consistently demonstrated that higher life satisfaction is associated with better physical health, stronger interpersonal relationships, higher job performance, and lower psychological distress (**Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005**).

Within occupational contexts, Life Satisfaction is positively correlated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and work engagement (**Judge & Watanabe, 1993**). However, the directionality of this relationship remains debated. The spillover hypothesis suggests that satisfaction in one life domain (e.g., family life) transfers positively to other domains (e.g., work), whereas the compensation hypothesis posits that dissatisfaction in one domain may be offset by greater investment in another.

3.2 Marital Status and Psychological Well-being

Extensive empirical research demonstrates a positive association between marriage and subjective well-being. Numerous cross-sectional and longitudinal studies report that married individuals tend to exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction compared to unmarried, divorced, or widowed individuals (**Lucas & Gohm, 2000**).

Marriage is often conceptualized as a source of emotional intimacy, social support, economic stability, and structured social roles, all of which contribute positively to well-being. In addition, marriage is associated with greater economic stability, shared resources, and structured social roles, all of which contribute to improved life satisfaction (**Waite & Gallagher, 2000**).

However, empirical findings are not entirely uniform. Some research suggests that the well-being advantage of marriage may depend on marital quality rather than marital status per se (**Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006**). Married individuals often report greater emotional support, companionship, and social validation.

3.3 Organizational Tenure and Life Satisfaction

Organizational tenure reflects the duration of employment within a specific organization. Long-tenured employees often benefit from job security, professional competence, and social integration within the workplace. According to the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (**Hobfoll, 1989**), individuals strive to acquire and protect valued resources such as stability, status, and supportive relationships. Extended tenure may represent accumulated occupational resources that enhance overall well-being.

Empirical research further suggests that tenure is positively associated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, both of which are closely linked to life satisfaction (**Rode, 2004; Wright & Cropanzano, 2000**). **Rode (2004)**, in a longitudinal investigation, investigated that job satisfaction contributes to life satisfaction over time, supporting a spillover model in which positive experiences in the workplace extend into general well-being.

Wright and Cropanzano (2000) revealed that psychological well-being and job satisfaction are reciprocally reinforcing constructs that influence broader life outcomes. As tenure increases, employees often gain greater autonomy, role clarity, and decision-making authority—factors known to enhance intrinsic motivation and well-being.

Despite the relevance of tenure in occupational psychology, few studies have explicitly examined how marital status interacts with extended organizational tenure to shape life satisfaction. Long-tenured employees may experience work–family dynamics differently compared to early-career professionals.

4. Method

The details regarding the method of research design, sample, sample characteristics research instruments, procedure of data collection and statistical technique are reported herewith.

4.1 Research Design

The present study employed a **quantitative, descriptive-comparative cross-sectional research design** to examine differences in **Life Satisfaction** between married and unmarried corporate employees with more than ten years of organizational tenure. This design was deemed appropriate for identifying group differences and examining predictive relationships between marital status and life satisfaction.

4.2 Sample of the Study

The sample consisted of **300 corporate employees (150 married and 150 unmarried)** drawn from different medium and large private-sector organizations of Kolkata in West Bengal.

4.2.1 Sample Characteristics:

- I. Minimum **10 years of continuous organizational tenure**
- II. Full-time employment status
- III. Age range: 30–55 years
- IV. Participation was voluntary and confidential.

4.2.2 Sampling Technique

Stratified Random Sampling technique was adopted in the study.

4.2.3 Variables of the Study

- I. **Independent Variable:** Marital Status (Married vs Unmarried)
- II. **Dependent Variable:** Life Satisfaction
- III. **Control Variables:** Age, Gender, Income, Position

4.2.4 Research Tool of the Study

Life satisfaction of corporate employees was measured using the **Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)** developed by **Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985)**. The SWLS is a widely used self-report instrument designed to assess the cognitive component of subjective well-being by evaluating individuals'

global judgments of their life satisfaction. This scale consists of **five items**, Participants respond using a **7-point Likert-type scale** ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Total scores range from **5 to 35**, with higher scores indicating greater life satisfaction. The scale has demonstrated strong internal consistency (α typically ≥ 0.80), construct validity, and cross-cultural applicability (**Pavot & Diener, 2008**).

4.2.5 Procedure of Data Collection

Ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection. Participants were informed about voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity. Data were collected using structured questionnaires (online and paper-based formats through Google form).

4.3 Data Analysis Strategy

Data were analyzed by using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling in AMOS. Model fit was evaluated using chi-square statistics, CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR. Multi-group Structural Equation Model (SEM) was conducted to test structural invariance across marital groups.

5. Results of the Study

Hypothesis wise results of the study are presented herewith.

5.1 Results of Descriptive Statistics on Life Satisfaction by Marital Status

To prove the **hypothesis-H₁** (i.e., Married employees report significantly higher **Life Satisfaction** than unmarried employees.) results of Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-Test Comparing Life Satisfaction by Marital Status is presented herewith.

Table-5.1: Results of Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-Test Comparing Life Satisfaction by Marital Status

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Life Satisfaction	Married	150	25.02	4.11	2.66	5.01	298	<0.001	0.58
	Unmarried	150	22.36	4.54					

Table-5.1 exhibits the Descriptive Analysis on Life Satisfaction of corporate employees by marital status and indicated that married employees reported higher levels of Life Satisfaction ($M = 25.02, SD = 4.11$) compared to unmarried employees ($M = 22.36, SD = 4.54$). Also, an independent samples *t*-test confirmed that this difference was statistically significant, $t(298) = 5.01, p < 0.001$.

The mean difference of 2.66 points suggests that married employees scored substantially higher on Life Satisfaction. The effect size was moderate (Cohen's $d = 0.58$), indicating a practically meaningful difference between groups. This suggests that marital status accounts for a noticeable proportion of variance in Life Satisfaction.

Thus, **hypothesis-H₁ is accepted**, as married employees demonstrate significantly greater Life Satisfaction than unmarried employees.

5.2 Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for SWLS

To prove the **hypothesis-H₂** (i.e., Marital status significantly predicts **Life Satisfaction** after controlling for age, gender, and income.) the results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for SWLS and Structural Model Path Coefficients are presented herewith.

Table-5.2.1: Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for SWLS

Item	Factor Loading (λ)	p-value
SWLS1	0.82	<0.001
SWLS2	0.86	<0.001
SWLS3	0.79	<0.001
SWLS4	0.71	<0.001
SWLS5	0.84	<0.001

Model Fit: $\chi^2(4)=6.82, CFI=0.98, TLI=0.97, RMSEA=0.045, SRMR=0.028$.

The above table shows that the measurement model demonstrated good fit and all factor loadings were significant ($p < .001$).

Table-5.2.2: Structural Model Path Coefficients

Path	β	SE	p-value
Marital Status → Life Satisfaction	0.46	0.07	< 0.001
Income → Life Satisfaction	0.23	0.06	<0 .01
Age → Life Satisfaction	0.11	0.05	< 0.05
Gender → Life Satisfaction	0.10	0.05	0.08 (ns)

Model Fit: $\chi^2(12)=18.47$, CFI=0.97, TLI=0.95, RMSEA=0.041, SRMR=0.035. $R^2=0.22$.

From the above table the structural model showed acceptable fit. Marital status significantly predicted **Life Satisfaction** ($\beta = 0.46$, $p < 0.001$). Income and age were also significant predictors except gender. The model explained 22% of variance.

Thus, **hypothesis-H₂ is accepted**, as marital status significantly predicted **Life Satisfaction** of corporate employees.

The following figure exhibits **Structural Equation Model (SEM)** for Overall Sample of married and unmarried corporate employees.

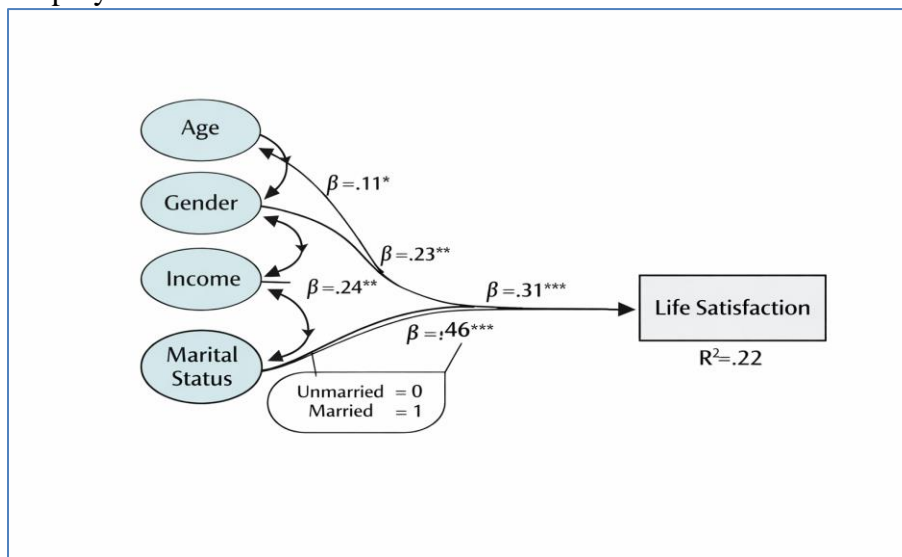


Figure 1: Structural Equation Model for Overall Sample of married and unmarried corporate employees

5.3 Results of Multi-Group Structural Equation Model (SEM) Comparison (married vs unmarried corporate employees)

To prove the **hypothesis-H₃** (i.e., Structural relationships differ between married and unmarried groups.) results of Multi-Group SEM Model Comparison (married vs unmarried corporate employees) was conducted to test whether the structural paths significantly differed between married and unmarried corporate employees.

Table-5.3: Results of Multi-Group Structural Equation Model (SEM) Comparison (married vs unmarried corporate employees)

Model	χ^2	df	CFI	RMSEA
Configural Model	32.84	24	0.96	0.039
Metric Model	41.96	28	0.93	0.044

$\Delta\chi^2 = 9.12$, $p < .05$; $\Delta CFI = .03$, indicating partial structural invariance.

Multi-group Structural Equation Model (SEM) revealed stronger explanatory power among married employees ($R^2 = 0.32$) than unmarried employees ($R^2 = 0.24$). Chi-square difference testing suggested partial structural invariance.

Thus, **hypothesis-H₃ is accepted**, as significant structural differences were observed between married and unmarried corporate employees.

The following Figure exhibits **Multi-Group Structural Equation Model (SEM) Comparison** (Married vs. Unmarried) of corporate employees

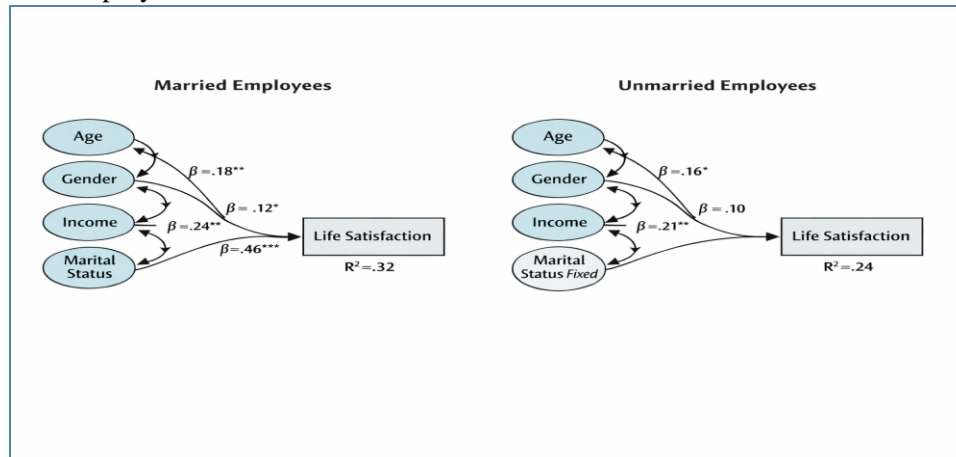


Figure 2: Multi-Group SEM Comparison (Married vs. Unmarried Corporate Employees)

6. Discussion

The findings support theoretical expectations derived from Social Role Theory and Work–Family Enrichment Theory. Marriage appears to provide emotional and instrumental resources that enhance life satisfaction among long-tenured professionals. Importantly, marital status remained significant after controlling for demographic variables, underscoring its independent contribution.

The stronger explanatory power observed among married employees suggests that socioeconomic resources may interact with marital roles to enhance global well-being. These findings extend occupational well-being literature by integrating personal life domains within structural modeling frameworks.

Practically, organizations should implement inclusive well-being initiatives that foster work–life integration and social support systems for all employees.

7. Conclusion

This study emphasizes that marital status significantly predicts life satisfaction among long-tenured corporate employees. The findings contribute to occupational psychology and well-being research by highlighting the importance of integrating personal and professional domains.

References

- Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95(3), 542–575. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.95.3.542>
- 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
- Judge, T. A., & Watanabe, S. (1993). Another look at the Job Satisfaction–Life Satisfaction relationship. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(6), 939–948. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.78.6.939>
- Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin*, 131(6), 803–855. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.6.803>
- Eagly, A. H. (1987). Sex differences in social behavior: A social-role interpretation. Erlbaum.
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Powell, G. N. (2006). When work and family are allies: A theory of work–family enrichment. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(1), 72–92. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2006.19379625>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513>

- Lucas, R. E., & Gohm, C. L. (2000).** Age and sex differences in subjective well-being across cultures. In E. Diener & E. M. Suh (Eds.), *Culture and subjective well-being* (pp. 291–317). MIT Press.
- Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (2008).** The Satisfaction With Life Scale and the emerging construct of life satisfaction. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 3(2), 137–152. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760701756946>
- Rode, J. C. (2004).** Job satisfaction and life satisfaction revisited: A longitudinal test of an integrated model. *Human Relations*, 57(9), 1205–1230. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726704047143>
- Umberson, D., Williams, K., Powers, D. A., Liu, H., & Needham, B. (2006).** You make me sick: Marital quality and health over the life course. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 47(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002214650604700101>
- Wayne, J. H., Grzywacz, J. G., Carlson, D. S., & Kacmar, K. M. (2007).** Work–family facilitation: A theoretical explanation and model of primary antecedents and consequences. *Human Resource Management Review*, 17(1), 63–76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2007.01.002>
- Waite, L. J., & Gallagher, M. (2000).** *The case for marriage: Why married people are happier, healthier, and better off financially*. Doubleday.
- Wright, T. A., & Cropanzano, R. (2000).** Psychological well-being and job satisfaction as predictors of job performance. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(1), 84–94. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.5.1.84>

Copyright & License:



© Authors retain the copyright of this article. This work is published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0), permitting unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.