

INSECURITY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to explore relation between insecurity and psychological well-being of people as a function of stages of adulthood, gender and working status. The study was conducted on purposively selected 120 respondents aged 20 to 85 years from different areas of Chittagong district. They were categorized into groups on the basis of stages of adulthood, gender and working status. The Bangla version of Insecurity Questionnaire (Uzzaman, Sultana, & Hossain, 2010) and Psychological well-being Scale (Huque & Begum, 2005) were used to measure insecurity and psychological well-being. The findings show that the mean of early adult people shows more insecurity than middle and late adult people ($F = 13.78$, $df = 2, 108$, $p < .001$); mean of non-government employee was more than government employee ($F = 15.41$, $df = 1, 108$, $p < .001$); There is significant interaction effect between stages of adulthood and working status ($F = 4.26$, $df = 2, 108$, $p < .02$) according to insecurity. On the other hand, mean of middle adulthood shows more psychological well-being than early and late adulthood ($F = 6.70$, $df = 2, 108$, $p < .002$). Finally, result also showed significant negative correlation ($r = -.19$, $p < .05$) between insecurity and psychological well-being.

Key Words: *Adulthood, Insecurity, Psychological Well-being*

Introduction

Adulthood is the period in the human life span in which full physical and intellectual maturity has been attained. It is the phase of development characterized by physical and mental maturity. Adulthood is both a transition between the beginning and end of life and a continuing journey from youth to old age. There are 3 stages of adulthood ages in years such as, early adulthood (17-40 years); middle adulthood (40-60 years) and late adulthood (above 60 years). As young people move from adolescence into adulthood, several changes continue to occur, but they are more gradual. Their insecurity occurs at different stages of adulthood. As a result, their psychological well-being also changes. So, insecurity and psychological well-being are the two influencing factors during the periods of adulthood.

Insecurity is a feeling of uncertainty, a lack of confidence or anxiety about oneself. Feelings of insecurity can be defined as emotional instability, feeling of rejection, inferiority anxiety, isolation, jealousy, hostility, irritability in consisting and tendency to accept the worst general permission or unhappy. Maslow *et al.* (1945) identified psychological insecurity is the contrasting

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feeling of expecting risk or danger to oneself. Therefore, insecurity is an inner feeling of being threatened and inadequate in some way.

Psychological well-being is the subjective feeling of contentment, happiness, satisfaction with life experiences and of one's role in the world of work, sense of achievement, utility, belongingness, and no distress, dissatisfaction or worry etc. Psychological well-being refers to the simple notion of a person's welfare, happiness, advantages, interests, utility, and quality of life (Burriss *et al.*, 2009). Ryff (1991) stated that convergence of similar features of positive psychological functioning constitutes the core dimensions of psychological well-being. By definition therefore, people with high psychological well-being report feeling happy, capable, well-supported, satisfied with life, and so on.

In one study Heaney *et al.* (1994) examined the effects of job insecurity of 207 automobile workers in US on male sample and they found that prolonged job insecurity have greater impact on the employees wellbeing. Anjum & Aizaj (2014) studied on the influence of gender on feeling of security-insecurity of participant. They verified that female participant experience more insecure feelings than male. Tolbert & Moen (1998) also detected gender differences in their studies; males attributed significantly higher importance to job security than females did. Jacobson (1991) in his study he established a concept that those who perceive it to be a very serious event to loss their job will feel more vulnerable towards that event, and experience more insecurity. The occurrence of losing job and insecurity is common in private sector than government sectors. Creed & Watson (2003) worked on age, gender, psychological well-being and the impact of losing the latent and manifest benefits of employment in unemployed people. A total of 386 unemployed adult people was selected based on three groups such as, young, middle and late adult people. They found that psychological well-being does no differ between male and female adult people. Bisht & Khullar (2016) studied on the difference in psychological well-being of male and female employees working in government and private sectors exhibiting three levels of organizational role stress. Their finding revealed that government employees possess more psychological wellbeing than private employees. On the other hand, female respondents showed more psychological wellbeing than male respondents. Alam & Rizvi (2012) worked on psychological well-being among bank employees. They reported that psychological well-being among government bank employees is higher as compared to their counterparts in private sector banks.

Adulthood marks the ability to have bodily functions at the maximum limit of human condition. During adulthood periods people gradually become aware of their physiological changes. In this period individual realizes his/her abilities, learn to cope with their unsecure environment. People become aware about the diverse situation which may danger their psychological well-being. Feelings of insecurity during adulthood period have greater influence not only on the persons but

also on the other family members. This insecurity may arise from individuals' gradual decreases of control on the surrounding events and also from physical inability to function normally with physical events. In another aspect, this insecurity affects their working status. If the working status of the organization does not fulfill person's expectations, he/she may feel financial or societal insecurity. This type of insecurity has large impact on person's psychological well-being. Most of the studies in this area have been done in western culture. In Bangladesh there are very few studies. Therefore, this study was undertaken to contribute both to our general and practical knowledge; and also to suggest a series of action in the related areas. Findings of the study will help for the policy makers and plan executors to adapt realistic plans to improve and enlighten the people to succeed everywhere in life.

The main objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between insecurity and psychological well-being of adult people. Specific objectives of the study were to investigate whether insecurity of adult people vary according to the stages of adulthood, gender and working status and psychological well-being of adult people varies in relation to the stages of adulthood, gender and working status.

Material and Methods

Respondents

To collect data, 120 adults were purposively selected as study respondents from different schools, colleges and some residential areas of Chittagong district. Among 120 respondents 40 early adult people (20 were male and 20 were from female) and 40 middle adult people (20 were male and 20 were from female) and 40 late adult people (20 were male and 20 were from female). Each group again consisted of 10 from government jobs and 10 from non-government jobs. Through personal observation, the researcher found the selected respondents functioning well in mental and physical activities.

Measuring Instruments

Following Instruments were used to conduct the present study:

1. Personal Information Form

A personal information form (PIF) was used to collect information like age, gender, working status, socioeconomic status etc.

2. Feeling of Insecurity Questionnaire

Bangla version of (Uzzaman, Sultana, & Hossain, 2010) Insecurity Questionnaire was used for the insecurity related data collection. The translating reliability of the questionnaire was .62. The original scales reliability and validity found to be .94 and .71 consecutively. The instrument was first developed by Pati (1974) and it had 20 statements. The scale consisted of 20 items and each

item was four point continuums as Likert type scale. The score for each negative statement was form 4 to 1 respectively for “always”, “often”, “sometimes” and “never”. The scores were reversed for the positive statements i.e. from 1 to 4 for always to never. Total scores of the scales were obtained from sum total of scores on 20 statements. The maximum possible score for this scale is 20 and the endpoint being 50. A high total score indicated high insecurity and low total scores indicated low insecurity.

3. Psychological Well-being Questionnaire

Psychological Well-being of the respondents was measured using the psychological well-being scale developed by Ryff (1989) and adapted in Bengali by Huque & Begum (2005). The Psychological Well-being Scale was also found to be a reliable and valid measure of people’s Well-being considering the Cronbach Alpha .88 (whole scale), test-retest reliability .86; convergent validity .76 and criterion-related validity .78 which was significant at $p < .001$ level. The questionnaire consists of 66 specific questions. Among the total questions, 33 were positive items and 33 were negative items. Items of the psychological well-being questions were scored 1,2,3,4 & 5 when the items were positive and the questions were scored 5,4,3,2 & 1 when the items were negative. Thus Positive 1 was assigned to such response as strongly disagree, number 2 was assigned to such response as disagree, positive 3 was assigned to such response as undecided, 4 assigned as agree and 5 assigned as strongly agree. In the negative scoring 1 was assigned to such response as strongly agree, 2 was assigned for agree, 3 was assigned as undecided, 4 was assigned as disagree and 5 was assigned as strongly disagree. High total scores indicated better psychological well-being and low total score indicate poor psychological well-being.

Procedure

For the present study, the main purpose was to collect information about the feelings of insecurity and psychological well-being of adulthood. For this reason, participants were purposively selected from different areas in Chittagong district. Before administration of the questionnaire, a close relationship was established with the respondents. Then the questionnaires were administered on each of the 120 respondents individually. The participants were requested to express their actual feelings and provide opinions related to the feelings of insecurity and psychological well-being for each question. They were also requested not to omit any item in the scale. They were encouraged to answer all the items. They were also informed that, there is no right or wrong answer to any item. There was no time limit for the respondents to answer all the items of the scale. The respondents answered the questions in the presence of the researcher, who remained silent throughout the answering process. After completing of their tasks, the answered questionnaires were collected from them. Finally, they were given thanks for their sincere co-operation.

Results and Discussion

The purpose of the present research was to see the difference between insecurity and psychological well-being of people as a function of stages of adulthood, gender and work status. Obtained data were analyzed using F-test and Pearson product moment correlation. All statistical analyses were carried out using the statistical program SPSS version 16.0 for window. The findings are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Insecurity Scores According to Stages of Adulthood, Gender, and Working status.

Stages of Adulthood	Gender		Working Status		Total
	Male	Female	Government Job	Non-government Job	
Early Adulthood	M = 58.10 SD = 4.84	M = 58.20 SD = 3.64	M = 58.25 SD = 3.52	M = 58.05 SD = 4.92	M = 58.15 SD = 4.23
Middle Adulthood	M = 54.90 SD = 6.45	M = 53.30 SD = 7.17	M = 50.70 SD = 7.08	M = 57.50 SD = 4.08	M = 54.10 SD = 6.78
Late Adulthood	M = 52.55 SD = 7.86	M = 49.95 SD = 7.89	M = 48.20 SD = 7.63	M = 54.30 SD = 7.06	M = 51.25 SD = 7.89
Total	M = 55.18 SD = 6.79	M = 53.82 SD = 7.25	M = 52.38 SD = 7.58	M = 56.62 SD = 5.75	M = 54.50 SD = 7.03

Table 1 indicates that mean insecurity score of early adulthood was 58.15 (SD = 4.23), middle adulthood was 54.19 (SD = 6.78) and late adolescent was 51.25 (SD = 7.89). That means the respondents who are in their early adulthood showed more insecurity feelings than the respondents who are in their middle and late adulthood. Mean insecurity feelings score of male adulthood was 55.18 (SD = 6.79) and female adulthood was 53.82 (SD = 7.25). Mean insecurity feelings score of government employees was 52.38 (SD = 7.58) and non-government employees was 56.62 (SD = 5.75). That means non-government employee showed more insecurity feelings than government employee.

To determine whether the differences observed between the means in Table 1 were statistically significant, three-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed.

Table 2. Summary of the Analysis of Variance of Insecurity Score According to Stages of Adulthood, Gender, and Working Status.

Sources of Variations	SS	df	MS	F	Sig. Level
Stages of Adulthood (A)	961.80	2	480.90	13.78	.001
Gender (B)	56.03	1	56.03	1.61	.21
Working Status (C)	537.63	1	537.63	15.41	.001
A*B	37.27	2	18.63	.53	.59
A*C	297.27	2	148.63	4.26	.02
B*C	16.13	1	16.13	.462	.50
A*B*C	201.87	2	100.93	2.89	.06
Error	3768.00	108	34.89		
Total	961.80	120			

Table 2 shows that stages of adulthood had significant effect on insecurity ($F = 13.78$, $df = 2, 108$, $p < .001$); gender had no significant effect on insecurity ($F = 1.61$, $df = (1, 108)$, $p < .21$); working status had significant effect on insecurity ($F = 15.41$, $df = 1, 108$, $p < .001$). Early adulthood had more insecurity than middle and late adulthood; non-government employees had more insecurity than government employees. The result also shows no significant interaction effect between stages of adulthood and gender; gender and working status; stages of adulthood, gender and working status. The result indicates significant interaction effect between stages of adulthood and working status ($F = 4.26$, $df = 2, 108$, $p < .02$).

Table 3. Post Hoc Test (LSD) for Stages of Adulthood Insecurity scores.

(I) Stages of Adulthood	(J) Stages of Adulthood	Mean Difference (I-J)	SE	Significance Level
Early Adulthood	middle Adulthood	4.05*	1.321	.01
	late Adulthood	6.90*	1.321	.01
Middle Adulthood	early Adulthood	-4.05*	1.321	.01
	late Adulthood	2.85	1.321	.08
Late Adulthood	early Adulthood	-6.90*	1.321	.01
	middle Adulthood	-2.85	1.321	.08

*Based on observed mean, *the mean difference is significant at the .05 level.*

Mean differences as shown in table 3 at .05 level of significance through post hoc test (LSD) were found between early and middle adulthood and early and late adulthood. Similarity in table 3 significant mean differences in insecurity feeling at .05 level of significance through post hoc test (LSD) were found between middle and early adulthood. Mean differences were also shown in table 3 at .05 level of significance through post hoc test (LSD) were found between late and early adulthood.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Psychological Well-being Scores According to Stages of Adulthood, Gender, and Working Status.

Stages of Adulthood	Gender		Working Status		Total
	Male	Female	Government Job	Non-government Job	
Early Adulthood	M = 218.05 SD = 23.87	M = 211.90 SD = 34.88	M = 208.45 SD = 36.27	M = 221.50 SD = 20.02	M = 214.98 SD = 29.66
Middle Adulthood	M = 231.70 SD = 8.50	M = 228.00 SD = 14.28	M = 228.35 SD = 14.47	M = 231.35 SD = 8.31	M = 229.85 SD = 11.75
Late Adulthood	M = 224.85 SD = 11.32	M = 230.55 SD = 12.84	M = 226.20 SD = 11.35	M = 229.20 SD = 11.85	M = 227.70 SD = 12.29
Total	M = 224.87 SD = 16.72	M = 223.48 SD = 24.08	M = 221.00 SD = 24.77	M = 227.35 SD = 15.04	M = 224.18 SD = 20.65

Table 4 indicates that mean psychological wellbeing score of early adulthood was 214.98 (SD = 29.66), middle adulthood was 229.85 (SD = 11.75) and late adolescent was 227.70 (SD = 12.29). That means middle adulthood showed more psychological wellbeing than early and late adulthood. Mean psychological wellbeing score of male adulthood was 224.87 (SD = 16.72) and female adulthood was 233.48 (SD = 24.08). Finally, Mean psychological wellbeing score of government employees was 221 (SD = 24.77) and non-government employees was 227.35 (15.04). That means non-government employees showed more psychological wellbeing than government employees.

To determine whether the differences observed between the means in Table 5 were statistically significant, three-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed.

Table 5. Summary of the Analysis of Variance of Psychological Well-being Scores According to Stages of Adulthood, Gender, and Working Status.

Sources of Variations	SS	df	MS	F	Significance Level
Stages of Adulthood (A)	5170.85	2	2585.42	6.70	.002
Gender (B)	57.41	1	57.41	0.15	.70
Working Status (C)	1209.67	1	1209.67	3.13	.08
A*B	782.62	2	391.31	1.01	.37
A*C	673.35	2	336.67	0.87	.42
B*C	735.07	1	735.07	1.90	.17
A*B*C	429.65	2	214.82	0.56	.57
Error	41702.70	108	2585.42		
Total	6081293.00	120			

Table 5 shows that stages of adulthood had significant effect on Psychological wellbeing ($F = 6.70, df = 2, 108, p < .002$); gender had no significant effect on insecurity feeling ($F = .15, df = 1, 108, p < .70$); working status had no significant effect on insecurity feeling ($F = 3.13, df = 1, 108, p < .08$). Middle adulthood had more psychological wellbeing than early and late adulthood. The result also shows no significant interaction effect between stages of adulthood and gender; gender and working status; stages of adulthood and working status; stages of adulthood, gender and working status.

Table 6. Post Hoc Test (LSD) for Stages of Adulthood Psychological Well-being scores.

(I) Stages of Adulthood	(J) Stages of Adulthood	Mean Difference (I-J)	SE	Sig. Level
Early Adulthood	Middle Adulthood	-14.88*	4.394	.003
	Late Adulthood	-12.72*	4.394	.01
Middle Adulthood	Early Adulthood	14.88*	4.394	.003
	Late Adulthood	2.15	4.394	.88
Late Adulthood	Early Adulthood	12.72*	4.394	.01
	Middle Adulthood	-2.15	4.394	.88

*Based on observed mean, *the mean difference is significant at the .05 level.*

Mean differences as shown in table 6 at .05 level of significance through post hoc test (LSD) were found between early and middle adulthood and early and late adulthood. Similarity in table 6 significant mean differences in psychological wellbeing at .05 level of significance through post hoc test (LSD) was found between middle and early adulthood. Mean differences were also shown in table 6 at .05 level of significance through post hoc test (LSD) were found between late and early adulthood.

Table 7. Pearson's Correlation between Insecurity and Psychological Well-being scores of people.

Variables	N	Correlation Coefficient (r)
Insecurity		
Psychological Well-being	120	-.19*

***Significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)*

Table 7 showed a significant negative correlation ($r = -.19$) between insecurity and psychological wellbeing scores of people in Chittagong district with an alpha level of $p < .05$. It reveals that with the increase people's feeling of insecurity, psychological well-being of that people decrease. The similar result is found by Heaney *et al.* (1994) and Origo & Pagani's (2009). To lead happy

life, congeal and secured environment such as job security, mental happiness, physical health condition, marital life satisfaction are paramount matter. If any person feels any disturbance and insecurity in these areas, then it influences on the psychological well-being of the person.

It was evident from table 2 that stages of adulthood had significant effect on insecurity. Early adulthood had more insecurity feelings than middle and late adulthood. In the period of early adulthood are challenging and transitional phase in many ways. It is the time of great adaptation with some developmental tasks such as achieving graduation or post graduation degree, job selection, mate selection, family establishment, child birth etc. If a person fails to adjust with the situation then insecurity feeling, anxiety, suicidal ideation may arise. But in case of middle and late adult people have more maturation level and experience. So their insecurity feeling is low than early adult people. Findings from this study are consistent with Dey, Rahman & Rashid (2013) who stated that people of early adulthood had low adjustment and more suicidal ideation than people of middle and late adulthood.

Gender did not show significant effect on insecurity (table 2). This finding contradicts the finding of other researchers (Tolbert & Moen, 1998; Anjum & Aizaj, 2014), who stated that male has more job security than females. In the present time a drastically changes have been happening in society, education, law. Women can participate and contribute in different job sectors spontaneously. So, gender was no significantly effect on insecurity.

Working status had significant effect on insecurity feeling (table 2). Non-government employee had more insecurity feelings than government employee. The result is consistent with earlier research (Biissing, 1999). Most of the non-government companies are struggling industries. A struggling economy or industry can cause workers to fear for their futures. Therefore, tremendous pressure is placed on non-government organizations, to improve their performance and to become increasingly competitive. In such a competitive environment, the first fundamental consideration for most organizations is their profitability. In order for them to gain a competitive advantage, companies need to determine sources of cost-savings (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). Non-government employee had less job security, salary, promotion and more workload, than government employee. This factors influence on worker's life. Similar result was found in one study by Jacobson (1991) who found insecurity level of non-government employee is more than government employee.

Interaction effect was found significant between stages of adulthood and working status (table 5). The people of early adulthood had high level of insecurity feeling both government and non-government employee than middle and late government and non-government employee. When an early adult person firstly joins in an institution some factors need to be adjusted such as low salary, job permanent, job security, social and psychological adjustment etc., but in case of middle and late adult people have already adjusted these factors so their insecurity level is low.

Findings also revealed (Table 5) that stages of adulthood had significant effect on psychological well-being. Early adult people had less psychological well-being than middle and late adulthood. In middle and late adult person have lot of experience, stability in job, stability in family and social life. They can easily handle any situations. On the hand, early adult person are generally supported by parents especially financially and they need to perform different types of developmental task without prior experiences. These factors create mental pressure on this people and it impacts on psychological well-being. For this reason, psychological well-being is better among middle and late adult people than early adult people. This result is supported by Medley (1980) who found life satisfaction is better among middle and late adult people than early adult people.

Findings also revealed (table 5) that gender had no significant effect on psychological well-being. That means, the difference between male and female respondents in their psychological well-being is not significant. This finding is consistent with the findings of other researchers (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). Now-a-day's girls are more serious about their right and their position. They are more aware about all social responsibility and overcome all social restriction. Beside this it may be assumed that decreasing gender discrimination, increasing social support of female children there was no gender difference in psychological well-being. However, this finding contradicts the finding of other researchers (Bisht & Khullar, 2016) they stated that female showed more psychological wellbeing than male.

Working status had no significant effect on psychological well-being (table 5). That means, there is no significant difference between government and non-government employee according to psychological well-being. This finding contradicts the finding of other researchers (Bisht & Khullar, 2016) who found government employees had more psychological wellbeing than private employees.

The limitations of the present study were; a. the sample size was relatively small which is not sufficient to make valid generalization, b. the study was administered to some specific areas of Chittagong district. Therefore, further research works are needed have to be done with a larger sample. A broad based and well controlled nationwide research on insecurity and psychological well-being of people needs to be conducted know more about the situation. The people of early adulthood and non-government institutions encounter various adjusted, job related problems. In conclusion, it may say that these findings will be helpful for the job provider authority in taking initiative for people of early adulthood development.

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