THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVEL OF PERCEIVED DEPRESSION AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG THE UNMARRIED

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVEL OF PERCEIVED DEPRESSION 
AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG THE UNMARRIED

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This project is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a 
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ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVEL OF PERCEIVED DEPRESSION AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG THE UNMARRIED

Chu Sze Yin

The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between the level of perceived depression and life satisfaction among the unmarried. This study was determined through demographic factors including gender, age, race and life satisfaction. The subject of the study was 69 employees from Shin Yang Sdn. Bhd. Instruments used were Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) and Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS). The data obtained was analyzed with descriptive statistic and inference test. Independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to analyze the relation between independent variables, which were gender, age and race. Pearson’s Correlation was used to analyze the relationship between the level of perceived depression and life satisfaction. The result of the study showed that there was no significant differences among the independent variables. The study also showed that there was significant relationship between the level of perceived depression and life satisfaction.
ABSTRAK

Perhubungan di antara Tahap Penerimaan Kemurungan dan Kepuasan Kehidupan dalam Kalangan Golongan yang Tidak Berkahwin.

Chu Sze Yin

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of study, problem statement, research objectives and conceptual framework. The research hypotheses, significance of the study, definition of terms and limitation will also be included in this chapter.

1.1 Background of Study

Sadness is an emotion that is experienced by majority of individuals. However, it can become depression if it continues for an unusually long period. An individual can experience depression, which is diagnosed as psychological illness, either
conscious or unconscious. It can bring effects to an individual’s lifestyle in terms of physical and mental.

Depression affected an individual physically and emotionally as it involved suffering of pain and dysfunction in lifestyle (Rice, & LaPlante, 1998; as cited in Mills, n.d.). An individual might also experience depression due to the feeling of helplessness if he or she faced failure in achieving the goals (Seligman, 1975; as cited in Saunders, & Roy, 2000).

According to National Institute of Mental Health (2000), the symptoms of depression consisted of persistent sad, loss of interest, feelings of guilt, restless crying, insomnia or hypersomnia, weight gain or weight loss, fatigue, suicide ideations and poor concentration.


1.2 Problem Statement

The World Health Organization (WHO) (as cited in Rosliwaty, 2005) predicted that depression would be the second most common disease after heart attack. Rosliwaty (2005) reported that the number of cases of depression had increased from 11% in 1996 to 18.8% in 2001. According to the statistic done by Rosliwaty (2005) in 2004, a total number of 2004 people committed suicide in relation with mental illness. In United States, depression was the most commonly diagnosed mental disorder which affecting between 15% and 30% of its population
each year. In Australia, one in four women and one in six men experienced depression in their lifetime (Kessler, 1996; as cited in Report of the Chief Health Officer, 1997).

According to Johnson & Flake (2007), depression affected one in five women and one in ten men across their lifespan. It was reported that 5% to 10% of adults were clinically depressed, while 10% to 15% suffered subclinical levels or milder forms of depression. About 75% of adults who recovered from depression may experience this same disorder again in the future, with up to 40% of them recurring within 2 years. There are less than 25% of patients had received sufficient treatment.

Marital status was highly associated with the prevalence of depression. An example of a research related to this was carried out by Hirschfeld & Weissman (2002), where the result showed that married and unmarried individuals were less depressed than those who were divorced, separated and widowed. This was also supported by Brown (2000), stated that marrieds reported better mental health than the unmarrieds did. Palner & Mittelmark (2002) revealed that the separated and divorced individuals suffered more on mental distress than the marrieds. In addition, Niolan (2002) reported that 40% of the marrieds lived happily if compared to only about 25% in single people.

In Saunders & Roy (2000), it was shown that depression was negatively associated with life satisfaction. Simpson, Schumaker, Dorahy & Shrestha (1996) also reported a significant inverse relationship between depression and life satisfaction. Despite of that, the unmarrieds were found to be less satisfied than the marrieds according to Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith (1999; as cited in Bailey, & Snyder, 2007). In addition, women’s psychological well-being was also related to life satisfaction where widowers are less satisfied with life among men (Berg, Hassing, Mclearn, & Johansson, 2006).
1.3  **Objective**

This study contained two objectives, which were general objective and specific objectives.

1.3.1  **General Objective**

This study investigated the relationship between level of perceived depression and the life satisfaction among the unmarried.

1.3.2  **Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study were:

1.3.2.1 To identify the level of perceived depression faced by the unmarried in terms of gender.

1.3.2.2 To identify the level of perceived depression faced by the unmarried in terms of age.

1.3.2.3 To identify the level of perceived depression faced by the unmarried in terms of race.

1.3.2.4 To identify the relationship between level of perceived depression and life satisfaction among the unmarried.
1.4 Conceptual Framework

Demography Factors:
- Gender
- Age
- Race

Life Satisfaction

Level of perceived depression

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

This figure showed that the relationship between the demography factors and life satisfaction that would lead to the level of perceived depression faced by the unmarried. This framework would be used to develop questions and hypotheses for the questions.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant difference between gender and level of perceived depression among the unmarried.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between age and level of perceived depression among the unmarried.

Ho3: There is no significant difference between race and level of perceived depression among the unmarried.
Ho4: There is no significant relationship between the life satisfaction and level of perceived depression among the unmarried.

1.6 Significance of Study

The study is important for the researcher to increase knowledge about the relationship between the depression and life satisfaction among the unmarried. The researcher can identify the problems or factors that contribute to the level of perceived depression, so that it can serve as a guideline in the future.

Severe depression will lead to suicidal attempts and is harmful. Thus, it is important to carry out this study in order to investigate the causes of the level of perceived depression among the unmarried, either for men or for women. It can be a useful guide to other researchers too because it is believed that the findings of this study will provide valuable and useful data and information.

Finally, this study is also important as it can be applied in the area of counselling where counsellors and psychologists are able to increase their awareness of their roles in helping those who are suffering from depression. Although this study is not a new topic, it can provide new information or knowledge in the field of counselling. Besides, this study may come in handy for counsellors when assisting clients in deciding what is the best way or technique in coping, adapting, and managing depression.
1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Depression

1.7.1.1 Conceptual definition

An emotional state revealing itself with the loss of interest and pleasure in ordinary activities, great sadness, feelings of guilt and worthlessness, loss of appetite and sleep, and loss of sexual desire (Davidson & Neale, 1994; as cited in Ceyhan, Ceyhan, & Kurtyilmaz, 2005).

1.7.1.2 Operational definition

A psychological illness that causes disturbance to an individual's daily life by affecting one's body, mood and thoughts.

1.7.2 Life Satisfaction

1.7.2.1 Conceptual definition

A global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his chosen criteria (Shin, & Johnson, 1978; as cited in Saunders, & Roy, 2000).

1.7.2.2 Operational definition

Life satisfaction in this study refers to the measure of an individual's perceived level of well-being.
1.7.3 Unmarried

1.7.3.1 Conceptual definition

Marital status categories separated, divorced, widowed, and never married, these were collapsed into one category of unmarried respondents (Palner, & Mittelmark, 2002).

1.7.3.2 Operational definition

Unmarried in this study refers to the individuals who are categorized under the group or population of never married.

1.8 Limitation

There were several limitations in this study. The self-reported interview questions might not be consistent due to the different perceptions and opinions among the respondents. There was inherently slight variation on how the respondents understand the questions. Besides that, the result of the findings was highly depended on the honesty and cooperation of the respondents.

Due to the reason that the sample size of the respondents in this study consisted of mainly Shin Yang Sdn. Bhd., the results may not be relevant and suitable to be used for other organizations. 100 set of questionnaires were distributed but only 69 of the total questionnaires were completed. In addition, the sample size of the study was not representative for the whole population and it could not be generalized to the whole population.
Besides, the instruments were developed according to western context, and it might influence the result generated later due to cultural differences context. In addition, the respondents might not understand or confused with the meaning of the questions that they might be doubtful when answered the questionnaires.

1.9 Conclusion

Overall, this chapter had discussed about the background of the study, statement of problem, objective of the study, conceptual framework, research hypotheses, significant of the study, definition of terms used and the limitations of the study.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses about the past researches and literature review which will be included in this study. The researches and literature review are obtained from foreign countries. It is important to understand thoroughly about the topic related to this study in order for further explanations.

2.1 Depression

Depression had been defined as an arose from unpleasant feeling of sadness. Sandberg, Miller, & Harper (2002) defined depressive disorders as “a chronic, recurrent, and severe burden to both patients and their families”. It was the most
common psychiatric diagnosis (Craighead, Craighead, & Ilardi, 1998; as cited in Detweiler-Bedell, Detweiler-Bedell, & Hazlett, 2008), where it affected a large amount of population worldwide. This was also supported by the World Health Organization (2001, as cited in Byrne, Stewart, & Lee, 2004), stating that depression was one of the causes that led to disability worldwide.

Depression was increasing among the general population (Raj, & Dean, 2005). It affected nearly 330 million people all over the world (Smith, McCullough, & Poll, 2003; as cited in Raj, & Dean, 2005). The frequency of depression among women ranged from 10% to 25%, while 5% to 12% for men (American Psychiatric Association, 2000; as cited in Raj, & Dean, 2005).

Several studies had confirmed that 17–20% of the general population suffer from mild to severe depression, where it was associated with functional impairment either physically or emotionally (Panagiotakos, Pitsavos, Chrysohoou, Tsetsekou, Papageorgiou, Christodoulou, et al., 2004). Unfortunately, depression had hardly been noticed as it always associated with other disease as reported by Zarit & Zarit (1998; as cited in Sandberg et al., 2002).

### 2.2 Gender and Depression

Many researchers had given much attention to the study of depression and its relation to gender differences. For example, a research carried out by Kraaij, Garnefski, & Vlietstra (2008) showed that gender was significantly related to depression, where women reported more depressive symptoms than men were. Baron (1998; as cited in Saunders, & Roy, 2000) reported that 21.3% of women and 12.7% of men would experience depression across their lifespan.
A number of factors had been listed for the gender difference in depression, ranging from biological to social and cultural. However, none of these could determine the difference between gender and depression. One of the most common findings was that women reported at higher rate of depression than men according to Nolen-Hoeksema (2001; as cited in Thayer, Rossy, Ruiz-Padial, & Johnsen, 2003).

Sherrill, Anderson, Frank, Reynolds III, Xin, Patterson, et al. (1997) and Wu & DeMaris (1996) reported that women were at least twice as likely as men to experience depression within a lifetime. Piccinelli, & Wilkinson (2000; as cited in Breslin, Gnam, Franche, Mustard, & Lin, 2006) also indicated that depression was about twice as common in females than in males.

However, the change in gender roles might bring some evolution to this trend. According to Mazure, Keita, & Blehar (2002), the divergence in depressive onset may due to the difference in sex hormones between men and women.

2.3 Age and Depression

Breslin et al. (2006) reported that age was related with depression, either in a positive or negative relationship. However, the risk for adolescents experiencing depression was not related with age in a clear-cut manner, where it was related to age in females but not in males (Poulin, Boudrea, & Santor, 2005). Female depression was higher than male at the mid-late-adolescent due to external factors such as physical dissatisfaction, low self-esteem and unpleasant family historical (Lewinsohn, Gotlib, & Seeley, 1997; as cited in Beattie, 2005).

The rates of experiencing depression would increase with age (Papadopoulos, Petridou, Argyropoulou, Kontaxakis, Dessypris, Anastasiou, et al., 2005). In contrast, Fisher, Zeiss, & Cartensen (1992; as cited in Tan, Monga, Thornby, & Monga, 1998)