# Exploring the Happiness and Self-Esteem Levels of Government Primary School Teachers in Remote Hilly Regions of Uttarkashi District, Uttarakhand

# OPEN ACCESS

Manuscript ID: ASH-2024-12048497

Volume: 12

Issue: 4

Month: April

Year: 2025

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

Received: 03.02.2025

Accepted: 24.03.2025

Published Online: 01.04.2025

#### Citation:

Fatima, Gauhar, and Sangeeta Pawar. "Exploring the Happiness and Self-Esteem Levels of Government Primary School Teachers in Remote Hilly Regions of Uttarkashi District, Uttarakhand." Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities, vol. 12, no. 4, 2025, pp. 1–10.

#### DOI:

https://doi.org/10.34293/ sijash.v12i4.8497



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#### Abstract

India's diverse socio-economic landscape, particularly in mountainous regions like Uttarakhand, presents unique challenges to all the inhabitants, with particular difficulties for government primary school teachers located in remote, isolated areas in hilly districts. For that reason, the significance of subjective wellbeing among these educators amplified. Therefore, this study employs a descriptive survey method to explore the underlying determinants of happiness and self-esteem, as well as their interrelationship among government primary school teachers. The findings of frequency distribution and percentage analyses reveal various trends such as male teachers reported higher levels of happiness and self-esteem. Similarly, postgraduates exhibit greater happiness, albeit with lower self-esteem than graduates. Marital status also influences happiness, with married individuals reporting higher levels but concurrently displaying more significant proportions of low self-esteem. The 41-50 age group demonstrates the highest happiness, while the 30-40 age group exhibits the highest self-esteem. Statistical analyses exhibit no significant differences in the level of happiness and self-esteem based on demographic factors. Notably, self-esteem levels have statistically significant differences on the level of happiness and vice-versa also, both the variables have a moderate positive correlation. These findings underscore the complexity of determinants and advocate for tailored interventions for enhancing self-esteem and happiness among government primary teachers.

Keywords: Happiness, Self-esteem, Demographic Factors, Primary School Teachers, Remote Hilly Regions

#### Introduction

India has always stood out for its rich tapestry of culture, religion, language, art and diverse geological conditions throughout the world. With this, it also presents a unique context and setting for understanding the term 'happiness' as the nation's geographical diversity has led to significant disparities in the socio-economic status of its inhabitants. The evident disparity between plains and hilly regions draws attention to an interesting paradox that as India proudly enters in the race of becoming the world's largest and fastest growing economies on the global stage still, its considerable segments remain underdeveloped in every facet of life. According to the Human Development Report, the plain areas are comparatively advantaged in terms of development metrics than the hilly regions of Uttarakhand state that require primary infrastructural development, such as electricity, roads, and irrigation. These differences between the prosperous plains and the struggling hill districts

underscore the complexities and uneven development. The mountainous regions that have always posed enormous challenges for human habitation, making survival in these areas a continuous struggle throughout history (Sati). The unique physical characteristics like inaccessibility (lack of access to infrastructure, markets, technologies, and information), instability, and marginality have significantly contributed to their underdevelopment (Papola). Similarly, natives of the remote hilly regions of Uttarakhand face considerable challenges of fundamental nature along with harsh weather conditions and natural phenomena further complicate their daily survival.

Pursuing happiness has been a fundamental aspiration from the beginning of time and the quest for happiness gets further complicated as the contemporary life grows more multifaceted. Today, people with hasty and interconnected lives strive to rediscover the elements that once considered to a fulfilling and contented life, particularly the essentials that have been forgotten in the constant chase of worldly ambitions and material success. Especially after the pandemic with its 2 million deaths and widespread disruptions, the importance of happiness increased as a vital means to cope with heightened anxiety, insecurity, and life challenges (Helliwell et al.). Although opinions differ on the specific factors that constitute happiness still there is a universal consensus that every person is in perpetual search of it through all possible means. The United Nations General Assembly acknowledged the importance of happiness on a global scale. The assembly recognized the pursuit of happiness as a fundamental human goal and underscores the necessity of a balanced approach to economic growth that equally promotes the wellbeing of all people. By highlighting happiness as a critical component of human development, the UN encourages nations to consider policies that enhance their citizens' quality of life and overall happiness. This global perspective on happiness aligns with the need to address the disparities within countries like India to ensure that the well-being of all individuals is prioritized regardless of their geographic or socioeconomic status.

Today global initiatives focus on all vital factors such as physical and mental health, resilience and self-esteem that are crucial in personal happiness and life satisfaction. Self-esteem signifies a person's sense of self-worth and confidence which significantly impacts their emotional well-being also determines their resilience and perspective on life events. (Baumeister et al.) found that individuals with high self-esteem experience more positive emotions and life satisfaction as (Orth et al.) revealed that self-esteem predicts future happiness. (Sowislo and Orth) found correlation between low self-esteem and depression as well as diminished life satisfaction. Hence, understanding self-esteem as a predictor of happiness highlights the need to foster a healthy self-concept in individuals.

The level of happiness and self-esteem of primary level teachers situated in remote hilly regions hold utmost importance as these educators work tirelessly with scant resources and amenities, often under harsh weather conditions, and with students who are typically the first in their families to attain literacy and generally stand at a below-basic level. The challenges are profound for educators working in these remote hilly regions starting from their arduous journey to their schools which itself represents a significant obstacle, can be described as half battle won. Maintaining regular attendance, imparting quality education, fulfilling the objectives of educational programs, and effectively managing the scarce resources within and beyond the school premise remain goals that are extremely difficult to realize. It has been acknowledged that teachers are the most important actors in achieving school objectives (Hattie) also they have been identified as one of the highest ranked professional to experience stress (Corcoran and O'Flaherty; Naghieh et al.). And it is essential for the teachers to have a good state of health and even more a high level of subjective wellbeing to deliver quality education and meet the core prerequisite of being an educator. Hence, it is essential to understand their experiences that can offer valuable insights into the broader discourse on happiness and human fulfilment. Happy and prosperous societies are possible through nurturing healthy, happy, and prosperous individuals, a responsibility that belongs to both parents and teachers. Tofulfil such crucial responsibilities, the educational system needs teachers who are satisfied



with their lives, happy, optimistic, and positive about the future. Studies have shown how family, teachers, and relationships affect children's happiness that assign greater responsibility on parents, caregivers, and teachers (Uusitalo-Malvimaara and Lehto; Shoshani and Steinmetz). By supporting the self-esteem and well-being of teachers, we can create a ripple effect that enhances the happiness and development of the next generation.

Given the context above, the present study investigates the relationship between happiness and self-esteem among primary school teachers working in government schools in the Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand state.

# **Objective of the Study**

To study the level of happiness and self-esteem among government primary school teachers identified on the basis of their demographics.

# Hypothesis

- 1. Significant differences exist in the levels of happiness among government primary school teachers across various demographic sub-groups and self-esteem levels.
- 2. Significant differences exist in the self-esteem levels of government primary school teachers based on demographic variations and levels of happiness.
- 3. A significant relationship exists between happiness and self-esteem among government primary school teachers.

# Methodology

Present study employed a descriptive survey method to analyse the status of happiness and self-esteem among government primary teachers in relation to their different demographics. For this purpose, a sample of 176 teachers (107 male and 69 female) was drawn using a multistage random sampling technique. From the six blocks of Uttarkashi district, two blocks, Mori and Purola, were selected for the study. Subsequently, 78 schools were chosen from the Mori block, and 40 schools were selected from the Purola block. Descriptive (frequency distribution, mean) and inferential statistics (t-test, One-way ANOVA, and Pearson correlation coefficient) were used to analyze the

research data using SPSS 19. The tools employed to assess the specified variables include happiness scale, a 70-item questionnaire developed by Rastogi and Moorjani, and the self-esteem scale, a 23-item questionnaire devised by Dhar and Dhar. Face validity for the Happiness Scale was established through expert evaluation (N=12). Its criterion validity was confirmed by a strong correlation (r = 0.91) with the Subjective Happiness Scale, a Likert-based measure. Item analysis further verified its content validity. The Self-Esteem Scale demonstrated high content validity, with all items aligning with the construct. A reliability index of r=0.93 further supported its validity. Reliability was assessed using the split-half method, applying the Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula (r=0.87, N=277). The odd-even technique yielded r=0.88 (p<0.01), confirming strong internal consistency.

# **Analysis and Findings**

The descriptive findings, including frequency distribution and percentage, are presented in Table 1, 2, and figures 1, 2, 3 and 4. These tables and figures detail overall happiness and self-esteem levels and are further categorized by gender, educational degree, marital status, and age.

Table 1 Frequency Distribution and Percentage Analysis of Overall Level of Happiness and Self-esteem

Н	appiness	Self-e	steem	
Level	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Low	7	4	31	17.6
Average	108	61.4	90	51.1
High	61	34.6	55	31.3

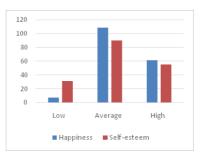


Figure 1 Overall Level of Happiness and Selfesteem

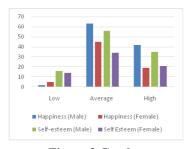
Table 1 and Figure 1 suggest that while most individuals experience average levels of happiness and self-esteem, there is a more significant proportion of individuals with high happiness compared to

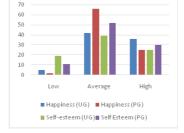
those with high self-esteem and a notably higher percentage of individuals with low self-esteem compared to those with low happiness.

Table 2 Frequency Distribution and Percentage Analysis of Level of Happiness and Self-esteem in Accordance to Gender, Academic Degree, Marital Status and Age

Variables	Happiness				Self-esteem			
Category (Gender)	Male	(107)	Fema	ale (69)	Male	Male (107)		ale (69)
Level	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Low	02	1.8	05	7.2	16	15	14	20.3
Average	63	58.9	45	65.3	56	52.3	34	49.3
High	42	39.3	19	27.5	35	32.7	21	30.4
Category (Academic Attainment)	Gradua	ate (83)	Postgra	duate (93)	Gradu	ate (83)	Postgra	duate (93)
Level	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Low	05	6.02	02	2.2	19	22.9	11	11.83
Average	42	50.60	66	71	39	46.98	52	55.91
High	36	43.38	25	26.8	25	30.12	30	32.26
Category (Marital Status)	Marrie	d (142)	Unmar	ried (34)	Marrie	ed (142)	Unmar	ried (34)
Level	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Low	04	2.82	03	8.8	23	16.20	08	23.5
Average	92	64.79	16	47.1	82	57.7	09	26.5
High	46	32.39	15	44.1	37	26.1	17	50

Variables	ables Happiness						Self-es	teem				
Category (Age)	30-40	(50)	41-50	(96)	51-60	(30)	30-40	(50)	41-50	(96)	51-60	(30)
Level	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Low	01	2	03	3.1	03	10	11	22	14	15.6	06	20
Average	31	62	61	63.5	16	53.4	22	44	53	55.2	15	50
High	18	36	32	33.4	11	36.7	17	34	29	30.2	09	30





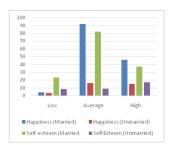


Figure 2 Gender

Figure 3 Academic Attainment

Figure 4 Marital Status

As observed in Table 2, Figure 2, 3 and 4 reveal several notable trends concerning happiness and self-esteem across different demographics. For gender, males show a prominent percentage of high happiness at 39.3% and a significant level of high self-esteem

at 32.7%. This suggests that a notable proportion of males experience high levels of both happiness and self-esteem. While, females exhibit different patterns, with 27.5% reporting high happiness and 30.4% having high self-esteem. Many studies disclosed

that men generally report higher level of self-esteem in variety of population, samples and measures (Trzesniewski et al.; Orth and Robins; Huang). Regarding educational attainment, individuals with postgraduate degrees report a substantial percentage of average happiness at 71%, indicating a strong association between higher education and wellbeing. Graduates, however, demonstrate a higher percentage of low self-esteem at 22.9%, indicating that a significant portion of this group experiences challenges related to self-perception. Examining marital status, married individuals show a high level of average happiness at 64.79%, reflecting a generally positive emotional state among this group which is corroborated by certain research showing that married people exhibit a happiness self (Graham and Chattapadhyaya; Stevenson and Wolfers; Hori and Kamo). Nonetheless, this group also has a notable percentage of low self-esteem at 16.20%, suggesting that despite their overall happiness, some married individuals face issues with self-esteem. The data on age reveals that the 41-50 age group experiences the highest level of average happiness at 63.5% and a notable percentage of high self-esteem at 34% and these findings align with the similar findings of the study conducted by (Urry and Gross) which

assert that older adults tend to experience higher happiness than their younger counterparts. This age group appears to be associated with peak levels of emotional well-being and self-regard. In contrast, the 51-60 age group has the highest percentage of low self-esteem at 20%, indicating that self-perception challenges may become more prominent in the later stages of life.

# Hypothesis 1

Table 3 demonstrates that the mean happiness scores remain relatively consistent across all subgroups however, the standard deviation (SD) reveals more significant variability in happiness among females, graduates, and unmarried primary teachers. A comparative analysis based on gender (t(174)=1.42) indicates no statistically significant differences in happiness (Mahon et al.). Similarly, academic attainment shows no significant mean differences (t(174)=0.16), corroborated by studies of (Shields et al.; Powdthavee et al.; Nikolaev and Rusakov). Marital status also vields no significant variation in happiness (t(174) = -0.064). In each case, the p-values exceed the .05 alpha level and indicating insignificant statistically differences in happiness across these variables.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-Tests for Happiness Scores based on Gender, Academic Attainment and Marital Status

Sub-groups	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	
C 1	Male	107	245.65	1 42	1.42	174	Ingignificant
Gender	Female	69	238.8	1.42	1/4	Insignificant	
Academic Attainment	Graduate	83	243.37	.16	174	In airmif a ant	
Academic Attainment	Postgraduate	93	242.6	.10	1/4	Insignificant	
Marital Status	Married	142	242.9	064	174	I	
Marital Status	Unmarried	34	243.29	064	064	1/4	Insignificant

Table 4 ANOVA Results for Happiness Variable: Influence of Age and Level of Self-Esteem

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age:	Between Groups	1012.60	2	506.30	.52	Ingignificant
30-40, 41-50, 51-60	Within Groups	167585.38	173	968.70	.32	Insignificant
Level of Self-Esteem:	Between Groups	27531.69	2	13765.84	16.00	Significant at
Low, Average and High	Within Groups	141066.29	173	815.41	16.88	0.01 level**

Table 4 presents the ANOVA results indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in mean happiness scores across different age groups (F(2, 173) = 0.52, p = 0.59). Conversely, the analysis

reveals a statistically significant difference in mean happiness scores among the three self-esteem groups (F(2, 173) = 16.88, p < 0.001).

In Table 5, post-hoc tests (multiple comparisons) further clarify these findings by identifying specific differences between the self-esteem levels. Teachers with low self-esteem have significantly lower mean happiness scores compared to those with average self-esteem (p=0.018) and high self-esteem (p<0.001). Additionally, teachers with high self-

esteem exhibit significantly higher mean happiness scores compared to those with low self-esteem (p<0.001) and average self-esteem (p<0.001). The findings revealed that low self-esteem experience notably lower levels of happiness conversely, higher self esteem tend to have greater happiness.

Table 5 Pairwise Mean Differences in Happiness Scores Based on Levels of Self-esteem

(I) Level of self-esteem	(J) Multiple comparisons of level of self-esteem	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p-value		
Low	Average	-16.37*	5.94	.018	Significant at 0.05 level*	
Low	High	-36.09*	6.43	.000	Significant at 0.001 level**	
Aviamaga	Low	16.37*	5.94	.018	Significant at 0.05 level*	
Average	High	-19.71*	4.91	.000	Significant at 0.001 level**	
High	Low	36.09*	6.43	.000	Significant at 0.001 level**	
High	Average	19.71*	4.91	.000	Significant at 0.001 level**	

# **Hypothesis 2**

Table 6 presents a t-value of 0.38 for gender, indicating no statistically significant difference in mean self-esteem scores between male and female primary teachers (Manne-Goehler et al.; Patton et al.; Subon et al.), suggesting no gender disparity in

the population. Similarly, the t-value for academic attainment (-1.57) and marital status (-.81) also signifying that these variables also do not show statistically significant differences in mean self-esteem scores, as corroborated by studies of (Ross and Broh; Kour et al.).

Table 6 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-Tests for Self-esteem Scores based on Gender, Academic Attainment and Marital Status

Sub-grou	ps	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	
Gender	Male	107	92.06	14.79	.38	174	Ingignificant	
Gender	Female	69	91.23	13.13	.38	1/4	Insignificant	
Academic Attainment	Graduate	83	89.98	16.17	-1.57	174	Insignificant	
Academic Attainment	Postgraduate	93	93.30	11.89	-1.37	1/4		
Marital Status	Married	142	91.31	13.34	01	174	I i i C	
iviainai Status	Unmarried	34	93.50	17.17	81	81	1/4	Insignificant

Table 7 One-Way ANOVA Results for Self-Esteem Based on Age Groups and Level of Happiness

One-way Al	One-way ANOVA		df	F	Sig.
Age:	Between Groups	520.62	2	1.31	Insignificant
30-40, 41-50, 51-60	Within Groups	34419.83	173	1.31	msignincant
Level of Happiness:	Between Groups	4603.57	2	13.13	C:::Ctt 0 01 I1**
Low, Average and High	Within Groups	30336.88	173	13.13	Significant at 0.01 Level**

Table 7 presents the analysis reveals no statistically significant difference in mean selfesteem scores across these age groups However, a significant variation in mean self-esteem scores is observed among different levels of happiness (p<0.001), aligning with the findings of Sato and Yuki.



Also, Table 8 provides the results of post-hoc tests, revealing specific differences among primary teachers with varying levels of happiness. The findings indicate that primary teachers with average happiness have significantly lower mean happiness scores than those with high happiness, p< 0.01.

There is no significant difference between those with low and average happiness. Furthermore, primary teachers with high happiness exhibit significantly higher mean self-esteem scores particularly when compared to average happiness levels, but not as distinctly when compared to low happiness levels.

Table 8 Pairwise Mean Differences in Self-esteem Scores Based on Levels of Happiness

(I) Level of happiness	(J) Multiple comparisons of level of happiness	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p-value		
Low	Average	47	5.16	.996	Insignificant	
Low	High	-11.18	5.28	.090	Insignificant	
Avaraga	Low	.47	5.16	.996	Insignificant	
Average	High	-10.72*	2.12	.000	Significant at 0.001 level**	
High	Low	11.18	5.28	.090	Insignificant	
High	Average	10.72*	2.12	.000	Significant at 0.001 level**	

# Hypothesis 3

The data presented in Table 9 demonstrates a significant correlation between happiness and self-esteem, as evidenced by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.408\*\*. This analysis reveals a moderately positive association between these two variables suggesting that individuals with elevated happiness levels tend to exhibit higher self-esteem.

Similarly, a decline in happiness level is parallel to diminished level of self-esteem. These findings are corroborated by (Cheng and Furnham; Hill; Salavera et al.). Figure 5 visually represents this positive correlation among 176 participants, with the regression which supports the positive relationship between happiness and self-esteem.

Table 9 Correlation between Happiness and Self-esteem Scores

Variables	N	df	r-value	Significance at 0.01 level
Happiness and Self- esteem	176	174	.408**	Significant

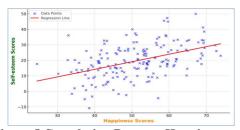


Figure 5 Correlation Between Happiness and Self-esteem with Scatter Plot and Regression

#### Discussion

The findings from this study offer meaningful insights into the interplay between happiness and self-esteem across various demographics, in which the trends underscore the multifaceted interactions among gender, academic attainment, marital status, and age in shaping levels of happiness and self-esteem. However, statistical analysis indicates no

significant gender, education, marital status, or age-based differences in happiness and self-esteem among primary teachers. This suggests that other factors influence happiness and self-esteem more than these factors. Happiness scores are similar across gender, education, and marital status still, there is more variability among female, graduate, and unmarried primary teachers, indicating diverse factors influencing happiness and self-esteem in these sub-groups. However, there is a statistically significant difference in happiness scores based on self-esteem levels as well as in self-esteem scores across varying levels of happiness. Teachers with low self-esteem reported to have lower happiness scores compared to those with average or high self-esteem, emphasising the importance of nurturing self-esteem to enhance happiness. Also, the other comparison shows that teachers with high self-esteem have

significantly higher happiness scores contrasted with teachers having low or average self-esteem. The data shows a moderately positive correlation between happiness and self-esteem, indicating that higher happiness levels are associated with higher self-esteem and vice versa. This finding is substantiated by (Cheng et al.; Dogan et al.; Hill; Salavera et al.). Therefore, it can be asserted that interventions designed to enhance either happiness or self-esteem may positively influence both the variables.

#### Limitations

This study has certain limitations that must be acknowledged. The findings are based on a specific sample size, which may limit their broader applicability. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of response biases, including social desirability and subjective interpretation of the constructs. Moreover, the generalize ability of the results is constrained by the demographic and institutional characteristics of the sampled population, necessitating caution when extending conclusions to different educational settings or regions.

#### **Implications**

This study highlights the need for targeted interventions to improve teacher well-being in Uttarkashi's remote areas. Positive education (Rahm and Heise) should be integrated into training, while mentorship programs can provide guidance and reduce stress. Counselling services and peer support groups can help teachers manage challenges effectively. Gender-sensitive programs should support female teachers, and professional development opportunities can enhance competence. Mental health initiatives, including counselling, stress management workshops, and self-efficacy training, can strengthen resilience. Pre-retirement programs can facilitate a smooth transition for retiring teachers. School-based mental health programs, teletherapy, and mindfulness practices can improve workplace satisfaction. Providing incentives for well-being programs and ensuring adequate resource allocation for sustainable interventions can contribute to long-term improvements in teacher well-being. A holistic approach combining psychological support,

skill development, and professional recognition is essential for enhancing teacher well-being.

#### Conclusion

Hilly regions have tough terrain and arduous living conditions especially for government teachers working at primary level in the schools situated at remote and far-flung locations with minimal resources and amenities. Therefore, their overall well-being and its determinants emerge as a critical area of concern, not only for educators themselves but also for the significant role they play in their students' development and learning outcome. Hence, it can be emphasised that happiness and self-esteem, as essential elements of subjective well-being, requires concerted efforts from the government and concerned stakeholders to promote and cultivate individuals with elevated wellbeing and self-image.

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