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Purpose in Life among Youth and their Perceived Hopelessness

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Abstract
The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between purpose/meaning in life and hopelessness among young people. A sample was taken from the community population of Multan, Pakistan. An inclusion criterion for sample selection was both females and male adolescents and young adults who fall into the age range of 18–25. The total sample size was N = 50, out of which 42 (84%) were female and 8 (16%) were male. The full version of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) was used to assess the search for meaning and the presence of meaning in life. The Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS) was used to assess hopelessness. For better understanding, Urdu translations of both scales were used. A demographic sheet was used to get the basic personal information (i.e., gender, age, and education) of each participant. Along with demographic sheets, some qualitative questions were also added to get some additional information. Issues related to repetition and translation were identified during the pilot study. These issues were considered before conducting the main study. The Meaning in Life sub-scale for search showed good reliability for this study (a=0.8) compared to the previous study (a=0.88). The presence of a meaning sub-scale is associated with a significant relationship in the mean differences between meaning in life and hopelessness (p = 0.04). It is also concluded that with the presence of meaning in one's life, there is less hopelessness.

Keywords: Psychological Well-being, Adolescence, Hopelessness, Pakistan.

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Introduction:

Adolescence affects the success or failure of several developmental stages (identity exploration, self-understanding, puberty, etc.). (Damon & Hart, 1988).

These occurrences don't mark childhood-to-adulthood transition (Santrok, 2001). As a social and cultural phenomenon, adolescence is hard to describe (Santrok, 2001).

Adolescence is hard to characterize because of its social and cultural surroundings (Hine, 1999). Teenagers in certain Jewish communities become adults at 13 after the Bar Mitzvah. In Western civilizations like the U.S., adolescence is between ages 13 and 24. (Hine, 1999). In Western countries, adolescence is a new phenomenon caused by societal pressure (Hine, 1999). Western countries don't consider adolescence a separate period of life, unlike Eastern and Subcontinental cultures. When adulthood begins and how a person will move from infancy to maturity are difficult to predict (Hassan et al., 2022). Adolescence includes both conflict and personal growth as developmental stages (Damon & Hart, 1988). Understanding possible concerns is needed to understand growth-related conflicts (Santrok, 2001). Many thinkers explained developmental phases by focusing on a few critical changes that allow a person to proceed to the next stage and attain adulthood.

According to Piaget, adolescence is when abstract thought develops (Piaget, 1972). Erick Erikson (1968) gave exploratory ideas that this investigation might consider. Erikson (1968) said that adolescence is a period of self-discovery. Erikson calls the possibility of adolescent identity confusion. It's a period between childhood and adulthood. Erikson (1968) identifies this danger as loneliness, self-doubt, and direction lessness. These traits may make it hard for teens to shift to the next stage. Social-emotional processes produce emotions connected to social context and others. According to study, peers, culture, family, and school have an impact on teenage growth (Hall, 1904). Social development, personality development (identification, accomplishment, sexuality, gender roles), and environmental variables complicate this process

(Woodward, 2001). This research divides adolescent growth into two categories. One is purpose, which explores identities, and the other is hope. Teenagers are mostly students. Arthur Chickering (1993) based his 7 vectors on Erickson's identity vs. role dilemma. Competence, emotion management, autonomy, identity, interpersonal relationships, purpose, and integrity are the seven points. "Developing purpose" is guiding one's life by analyzing a definite passion, vocation, lifestyle, and educational sector (Chickering, 1993). Chickering connects this to Erickson's thesis by arguing a student's life goal reflects their sense of identity (Erickson, 1968).

College students are energetic but lack a defined goal. Students want a solid career after college (Benson, 2008). At the completion of their schooling, if they've found their purpose in life, their goal is to improve their talents, establish a life philosophy, or become lifelong learners (Iqra Mushtaque et al., 2022). They become goal-oriented and look for life's meaning. Developing a purpose in life means being more deliberate, defining hobbies, etc. (Bronk, 2009).

Purpose in life among youth:

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Adolescent Hopelessness:

Purpose in life brings hope. Hope is a positive, goal-directed feeling that motivates us to pursue a goal or purpose. Second, this mood exists when a person intends to achieve his objectives (Synder et al., 1991 as cited in Synder, 2000, p.8). Synder (2000) divides hope into four categories: objectives (set purpose), agency (feeling of purpose), route (planning to accomplish purpose), and impediments. Valuable goals give a direction and a defined end point for our thoughts, according to Synder (1994, quoted in Synder, 2000, p.9). Pathway thinking is the road we follow to reach that objective and an individual's perceived capacity to develop or locate these pathways (Synder, 2000). Hope motivates us toward objectives. Barriers impede our goal-attainment (Mushtaque, Rizwan, Abbas, et al., 2021). We may give up or attempt a fresh approach. This barrier might obstruct all pathways to our objective, leaving us impotent and meaningless (Diener, 1984).

Research (e.g., Synder et al., 1996) links goal success to happy sentiments, whereas goal obstructions (barriers) are associated with unpleasant emotions (Diener, 1984). This isn't always true. Hopeful individuals react differently to barriers than pessimists. Snyder et al. (2002) showed a link between psychological wellness, reduced depression, and academic achievement. Lack of hope may cause sadness, poor academic performance, and bad health (Diener, 1984).

Several measures established to evaluate hopefulness or hopelessness may be used to quantify hopelessness (Gottschalk, 1974; Sherick, 1983; Synder et al., 1991). Hopelessness is a psychological concept that may underlie mental disorders and contribute to depression, according to Beck, Weissman, Lester, and Trexler (1974). (Abramson, Metalsky, & Alloy, 1989). Depression often leads to suicide, according to research. Hopelessness (Drake & Cotton, 1986) and depression may predict suicidal behaviour (Beck, Kovacs, & Weissman, 1975). Page (2006) investigated hopelessness, loneliness, and suicide thoughts among Asian adolescents (Mushtaque, Rizwan, Dasti, et al., 2021). Taiwan, the Philippines, and Thailand were sampled. Suicidal persons scored high on the hopelessness scale, although the attempt rate varied (Page et al., 2006).

Hopelessness is investigated apart from connected variables (Haatainen K, Tanskanen A, Kylma J, Honkalampi K, et al., 2004). Hopelessness research on Pakistani teenagers demonstrated several linked factors that induce hopelessness (Ayub, 2009). Hopeless people believe they'll never succeed. They lose hope of reaching their aims (Ayub, 2009). Sensitive issues (hopelessness) are polled; findings may be biased since respondents may answer in a socially desired manner (van de Mortel, 2008). Social desirability is a respondent's inclination to say positive things (Nederhof, 1985). Self-reporting should account for these biases.

Helplessness isn't hopelessness. Abramson et al. (1989) distinguished helplessness from hopelessness. Research links helplessness to sadness and anxiety. Only those who are depressed suffer hopelessness or lose control (alloy, Kelly, Mineka, & Clements, 1990; Barlow, 1991, 2002; Chorpita & Barlow, 1998). Researching adolescent hopelessness helps identify whether growth is typical. Identity confusion or difficulties in attaining one's life purpose may have long-term effects on a person's health (Lewinsohn, Rohde, & Seely, 1995).

Adolescence, Purpose in Life, and Hopelessness:

Positive psychology has explored meaning/purpose and hope in teenagers (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Meaning and hope are positively related to mental health, according to the study. Hope relates to a range of mental health characteristics, including maladaptive coping methods and suicide thoughts (Arnau, 2002). (Range & Penton, 1994). Hope reduces anxiety and sadness, according to several research studies (Arnau, Rosen, Finch, Rhudy, & Fortunato, 2007). Hopelessness modulates self-esteem and life stress, according to Whissman and Kwon (1993). Frankl (1984) observed that hope promotes life purpose. Frankl (1984) emphasized the significance of hope in "Man's Search for Meaning." If purpose and meaning in life result in psychological well-being, hopelessness may have a negative connection with them (Nawaz et al., 2021). Teens look for purpose or identity and create objectives to achieve. At this point, they might study the repercussions of failing to reach their objectives. Hopefulness or hopelessness is linked to goal achievement. The link between hopelessness and meaning in life may be examined by completing the eighth stage of Ericksonian growth. Integrity against despair is Erikson's eighth and final psychological stage. Integrity prevents despair, failure causes inequality. Hopelessness defines disparity (Rizwan et al., 2021).

The study's rationale:

The preceding literature analysis emphasizes the necessity to assess the connection of purpose in life with hopelessness among adolescents. Current research examines the association between purpose/meaning in life and hopelessness among adolescents. Hope and purpose are important for mental health (Mascaro & Rosen, 2005).

Methodology:

Quantitative research was conducted using two instruments to assess the variables. Utilizing well-constructed standardized questionnaires, quantitative research allows us to analyze how people behave, feel, or think in a particular way and in a particular group. It permits maintaining objectivity, accuracy, validity, and reliability of data and permits finding associations between variables (Sarantakos, 2005). Questions included in the qualitative demographic sheet are discussed under the heading of "demographic sheet. A random sampling technique was used. A sample was collected by door-to-door knocking. A specific community was selected to take interviews. An inclusion criterion was also maintained for selecting the sample.

The setting of the Present Study:

The present study is conducted in the community of Dhok Khaba, which is a residential area in Rawalpindi District, Pakistan. Rawalpindi is a city in the Pothohar region of Pakistan near the country's capital city, Islamabad, in the province of Punjab. Information regarding the sequence of streets, the number of total houses, and the population of the area was taken from the office of registering voters. The information included a sequential map of different streets and their extensions. Door-to-door knocking was done. Details about addresses were noted on the protocol for further use as an individual identity in SPSS while entering the data. Average responses taken were also noted.

Inclusion Criteria and Exclusion Criteria:

All male and female individuals of about 18 to 25 years of age living in the community (Multan District) were included in the present study. Individuals who were aged 17 and a half years or more were not included in this study. Similarly, individuals over 25 were also excluded. Some houses were re-visited to take interviews if participants were not available at the time of data collection. Details are mentioned in the discussion section.

Instruments Used:

A demographic performance was designed and a series of standardized questionnaires having good validity and reliability were selected. Those standardized scales were used, which were originally administered to this age band.

- **Demographic Sheet:**

The Demographic sheet was created to collect personal or basic information about the participant, such as gender, age, religion, meaning of religion, siblings, birth order, family system, exercise, education, father's education, mother's education, father's employment, etc. The demographic sheet describing the study's objective included a permission form and ensured anonymity. The interviewee must sign a permission document. Demographic characteristics were carefully chosen to examine their relationships. In the study's findings section, demographic characteristics were also calculated. The discussion provides further details. Table 7 and Table 8 illustrate demographic mean differences with other factors. The demographic sheet was pre-piloted. New information was added. Participants understood it better in Urdu.

- **Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ):**

In 2006, Michael F. Steger founded MLQ. The 10-item survey measures two dimensions of life's meaning. Subscales include: (MLQ; Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler, 2006). The existence of meaning (how much respondents feel their lives have significance) and the pursuit of meaning (how much respondents strive to find meaning and understanding in their lives). On a 7-point Likert scale, 1 means "Absolutely True" and 7 means "Absolutely False" (Steger, M. F., et al., 2006). Steger & Samman (2012) studied psychometric life meaning data. The MLQ-SF scores correlated well with various wellbeing measures throughout the sample.

This worldwide scale measures meaning and purpose in life. Cronbach's alpha (.88) and inter-item correlations (rs) ranged from.66 to.73 for the three meaning items. The survey included 1,997 Chileans. It was a short-form psychometric assessment on purpose in life. Item 9, "My life has no apparent purpose," is reverse coded for scoring. Presence of Meaning items 1, 4, 5, 6, & 9 (items are mentioned in the appendix section). Search for Meaning items 2, 3, 7, 8, and 10 Continuous score.

- **Beck's Hopelessness Scale (BHS):**

1974: Aaron Beck founds BHS. The BHS (Beck et al., 1974) is a 20-item test that measures gloomy future expectations. Most teens use it. The BHS has strong psychometrics (Holden, 1986). Clinical measures of hopelessness correlate with the BHS between 0.66 to 0.74 (Beck et al., 1974), and BHS scores of 9 and higher predict suicide mortality in outpatients (Beck et al., 1990). Classified scoring. Internal consistency reliability was 0.93 and alpha was 0.86. Beck et al.

Over 3000 individuals were monitored in longitudinal research (Tanaka et al., 1998) This research verified BHS's predictive validity. Hopelessness is a risk factor for suicidal thoughts, a study finds. BHS averaged 8.6. (3.9). This means was mild to moderately despairing (Beck & Steer, 1988).

Methdology:

Multan University ran pilot research. Multan had 105,235 residents in 1998. (134,239 males and 370,996 females). This area has 1,740,000 residents, according to the 2009 census. BZU was the pilot region. We asked for authorization for a pilot poll. Before this, a survey procedure was finalized and translated into Urdu for clarity. Cross-checked for culturally irrelevant elements. Translations were verified for mistakes or terminology that didn't communicate the intended meaning. The procedure was then finalized. To collect demographic

data, a demographic sheet was created. The demographic sheet includes qualitative questions. The procedure included a permission form. This permission form describes our research and university. Before answering, participants signed a permission form. Guaranteed confidentiality. Urdu In page was used to type the scales and demographic sheet (12th version).

Research: After the pilot, major research began. Community data was gathered. Door-to-door data collection. Data was collected through interviews. Using random sampling. Respondents signed a permission form explaining the study's goal to ensure their willingness and secrecy. Data included 50 Multan inhabitants (male and female). 18–25-year-olds. The sample selection criteria include this age range. The population's registration list aided in data collection sequencing. Knocked on every door and recorded house and street numbers. Each street's response rate was determined. The research was introduced to earn their trust. Then they saw a permission document with the university's name and the study's goal. Those who agreed to be interviewed signed a Consent Performa indicating their free choice to participate. An interview was carefully planned to gather thorough answers. We attempted not to miss any information; however, responders might depart at any time. No response was required. Their answer was optional. This minimized prejudice. Supervisors saw group translations. These translations identify cultural or linguistic issues. These translations were re-translated into English after the pre-pilot study. Each interview averaged 1 hour. Data gathering took 4 weeks. Using SPSS 13.0, the findings were analyzed.

Tools for Data Analysis:

The SPSS-13th version was used. Frequencies were computed using descriptive statistics. Cross-tabulation, ANOVA (analysis of variance), and Chronbach's alpha reliability were computed. Tables are shown in the results section.

Discussion and analysis of tables are in the discussion section.

Results:

The present study aims to investigate the effects of the presence and absence of meaning in life on an individual's hopelessness in life. The tables in this section indicate the results which were obtained from data analysis. This chapter deals with the issues related to cultural differences and the repetition of items in the questionnaires of meaning in life (MLQ) and hopelessness (BHS), which were described by the respondents during the pilot study. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are used in this study. The hypotheses are tested, and the results are summarized at the end.

The sample consists of 50 individuals (both male and female) who fall into the age range of 18–25. Meaning in life, its search, and its presence in an individual's life were assessed by the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ). The presence of hopelessness was measured by the Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS). For a better understanding of the population, Urdu translations of both scales were used. For data analysis, the SPSS 13.0 version for Windows was used.

For measuring the face validity of scales, during the pilot study, respondents identified some issues related to the wording of items, which are mentioned in the following tables. Some questions that are mentioned in the methodology section were asked during the pilot study to know whether they understood the items or not. Descriptive statistics were used for demographics such as gender, age, and education. Chronbach's alpha reliability was computed to check the scales' internal consistency and compared with the previous studies. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed in inferential statistics to assess the difference between the means. Results obtained from the data analysis are mentioned in the following tables.

Table 1: Issues of qualitative questions

Questions	Issues
1. What does life mean to you?	Respondents were not able to understand and differentiate these questions. They considered it one question. Later it was decided to give some explanation to respondents regarding these questions
2. What gives meaning to your life? And why?	

Table 2: Issues of repetition in meaning in life questionnaire (MLQ)

Items	Issues
Item 1: I understand my life's meaning. Item 2: I am always looking to find my life's purpose. Item 3: I have discovered a satisfying life purpose. Item 4: I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life.	Full scale of MLQ was used due to which items of presence and search sub-scales were contradictory. Respondents found it difficult to response on both scales.

Table 3: Frequency (f) and Percentage (%) values of Demographics in terms of gender, age, and education. (n=50)

Variables	*F*	*%*
Gender		
male		
female	8	16
Age	42	84
18 years and below	15	30
19-21	21	42
22 and above	13	26
Your education		
Matric	10	20
College Education	39	78

**f=frequency*

Table 4: Mean, Standard deviations (S.D) and ranges (potential and absolute) of Meaning in life Questionnaire (MLQ) and Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS). (n=50)

Scales	No. of items of scale/subscale	Mean	S. D	α	Range		Skew
					Potential	actual	
MLQ	10	49.22	7.77	0.53	30-67	10-70	-.03
*** Search**	5	25.68	7.08		5-35	5-35	
***Presence**	5	23.54	4.88	0.80	14-35	5-35	-1.0
				0.51			4.88
BHS	20	4.90	3.48	0.76	0-13	0-20	0.59

*Sub-scales of MLQ, ** S. D= standard deviation. α = alpha reliability
* Reliability of MLQ and its subscales and BHS is compared with the reliabilities of these scales in previous studies (e.g., Steger & Kashdan, 2013 and Beck, A. T., et al, 1974)

Table 5: Chi-square and Cross-tabulation among Beck hopelessness Scale (BHS) and demographic categories (n=50)

Demographics	Minimal f (%)	BHS Mild f (%)	Moderate f (%)	Total	X2	df	p
Gender							
Male	3(37.5)	4(50)	1(12.15)	8(16)	4.79	4	0.30
Female	18(42.9)	16(38.1)	8(19)	42(84)			
Age							
18 years and below	5(33.3%)	7(46.7)	3(20)	15(30.6)	4.79	4	0.30
19-21	11(38.5)	9(42.9)	1(4.8)	21(42.9)			
21 and above	5(38.5)	4(30.8)	4(30.8)	13(26.5)			
Education							
Matric	2(20)	6(60)	2(20)	10(20.4)	3.0	2	0.2
College education	19(48.7)	13(33.3)	7(17.9)	39(79.6)			

p>0.05

Table 6: Mean difference between a search for meaning in life, presence, and hopelessness (ANOVA) (n=50)

MLQ scale	Minimal (N=21)	BHS Mild (N=20)	Moderate (N=9)	F	P
***Search**	24.8(7.06)	26.2(8.36)	26.7(3.57)	0.31	0.74
***Presence**	24.1(4)	24.5(5.4)	19.8(4.3)	3.4	0.04**

df = 2, p>0.05 *sub-scales of meaning in life questionnaire (MLQ), **significant value.

Table 7: Mean differences between the search for meaning in life according to gender, age, and education. (ANOVA) (n=50)

MLQ Scale	Demographic variables	N	M	SD	Df	F	P
	Gender						
***Search**	**Male**	8	27.62	8	1	0.7	0.4
	Female	42	25.31	6.9			
	Age						
	18 yr and below	15	27.73	6.41	2	1.17	0.3
	19-21	21	25.57	7.73			
	22 and above	13	23.62	6.86			
	Education						
	Matric	10	29	7.36	1	3	0.08
	College Education	39	24.6	6.87			

P>0.05 *subscale of meaning in life questionnaire (MLQ)

Table 8: Mean differences between the presence of meaning in life according

to gender, age, and education. (ANOVA) (n=50)

MLQ Scale	Demographic variables	N	M	SD	df	F	P
	Gender						
*Presence	Male	8	26.5	5.5	1	3.6	0.06
	Female	42	22.9	4.6			
	Age						
	18 yr and below	15	22.8	5.16	2	0.19	0.8
	19-21	21	23.9	5.43			
	22 and above	13	23.6	4			
	Education						
	Matric	10	26.20	6.3	1	3.6	0.06
	College Education	39	23	4.2			

P>0.05 *subscale of meaning in life questionnaire (MLQ)

Table 9: Pearson Product correlation between subscales of meaning in life questionnaire, meaning in life total and beck hopelessness scale. (n=50) *Sub-scales of MLQ.

Sr. No.	1	2	3	4
1.*Search	__	-0.196	0.78	0.162
2. *Presence		__	0.44	-0.23
3. MLQ total			__	0.00
4. BHS				__

Discussion:

The study examined purpose in life during adolescence and how its presence or absence leads to hopelessness. This research examined the role of adolescents in acquiring meaning and searching for life's purpose. This part covers a study

summary, issues linked to the questionnaire pilot study, issues faced in the main study, conclusion of results, implications of studies, study limits, and future research ideas.

This study examined the link between presence, meaning seeking, and hopelessness. Adolescence and emerging adulthood are crucial for finding purpose. Literature has investigated how youth establishes the purpose and its long-term advantages (Arnett, 2000). In this study, gender, age, and education were evaluated. Demographic characteristics affect presence and quest for meaning across gender (male and female), age (18–25), and education.

Existential psychology improves mental health by utilizing Frankl's notion of purpose and meaning. Positive psychology emphasizes significance and hope as mental health components (Mascaro & Rosen, 2005). Psychologists and psychiatrists consider meaning in life an important concept. Meaning in one's life connects with psychological wellness, whereas the absence of meaning correlates with mental disease (De Klerk, 2005). Crumbaugh and Maholick (1964) used a psychometric technique to measure Frankl's meaning in life. As purpose in life relates to psychological wellness, this study assesses psychological well-being in terms of hopelessness (Shabbir et al., 2019). The present study investigated the association between the quest for meaning or the presence of meaning and hopelessness (Zhao et al., 2022). The Life Attitude Profile (Reker & Peacock, 1981), the Sense of Coherence Scale (Antonovsky, 1983), the Meaning in Life Scale (Jim, Purnell, Richardson, Golden-kreutz, & Anderson, 2006), and the Meaning in Life Questionnaire have been designed to evaluate meaning in life (Steger, Frazier, & Kaler, 2006). In this study, the major goal was to analyze the influence of the desire for meaning in life, and the presence of meaning, on hopelessness. Meaning in Life Questionnaire utilized (as it includes two sub-scales: one for search and one for presence). To measure

hopelessness, the Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS) was employed (Beck, 1974). In this study, 50 adolescents and young adults (male = 8 and female = 42) from Dhok Khaba participated (national town). Age restrictions were 18 to 25. Dhok Khaba was chosen because of the different socioeconomic positions of its residents. Information about the region was collected from registered voter lists. These listings featured streetwise divides and additional extensions. It helps plan to cover all streets before data collection. Data gathering began with street #1. After knocking on every door, basic family member, age, and gender information were acquired. This was done to see if the person met the inclusion requirements.

Steger's Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) was used to study meaning. The full version, including two subscales (search and presence of meaning), was utilized. MLQ SF is a short version of MLQ. This research favored the complete version to measure both search and presence. 5-item subscales have individual reliability calculated. All scales were pilot tested using translations before being applied. A demographic sheet collects personal and background information.

Table#1 lists the pilot study's repetition and translation issues. Future research will evaluate these difficulties before employing the meaning of in life questionnaire.

Table 3 shows that out of 50 adolescents and young adults, 42 (84%) are female and 8 (16%) are male. The data was acquired through door-knocking, and males refused more often than females. They lack interview time. 15 (30%) individuals are 18 or younger, 21 (42%) are 19–21, and 13 (26%) are 22 or older. 10 (20%) individuals had Matric and 39 (78%) attended college. Someone was illiterate.

Table 4 computes mean SD, Cronbach's alpha reliability, and ranges. Table 4 compares purpose in life to another research (i.e., Steger & Kashdan, 2013). All replies are within range, according to this study. Studies compared mean scores

and dependability. Two research used MLQ sub-measures with life satisfaction and social anxiety scales (Steger & Kashdan, 2013). The existence of meaning sub-scale averaged 17.95(3.78) while the search for meaning averaged 22.26. (4.48). The present study reveals mean presence sub-scale scores of 23.54(4.88) and searches sub-scale scores of 25.68(7.08).

Calculated Chronbach's alpha reliability. Previous research (e.g., Steger & Kashdan, 2013) found r = 0.88 for the quest for meaning sub-scale. Similar to the previous study, the reliability of the presence of meaning sub-scale was 0.51. The hopelessness scale's reliability was 0.76 and 0.86 in the prior study, which is close. Scales are reliable overall.

Table 5 shows the chi-square and cross-tabulation for Beck's hopelessness scale and demographics. Male and female hopelessness ratios are comparable. One (12.15%) male has moderate hopelessness. More women report moderate hopelessness. Previous research reveals no gender divide. The current study's (50) sample may include more women than men.

15 individuals were under 18, 21 were 19–21, and 13 were above 21. Younger depressives were milder. Normal 19-21-year-olds. Normal ages 21 and above. With age, individuals' hopelessness decreased. Many studies (e.g., Bronk, 2008; Damon, 2008) have examined purpose and meaning in life from adolescence to old age. Identity, self-focus, objectives, and goals (Arnett, 2004). From meaninglessness to looking for meaning to defining life objectives, all these stages have major ramifications for the effective transition of one stage of growth into another, and it ensures overall health through generating purpose (Damon, 2008). Finding significance in life increases well-being, according to these researchers. It fits the study's results. Age reduces hopelessness. Meaning in life may reduce hopelessness. The age range of 18 to 25 is significant because it spans late adolescence and emerging adulthood, allowing quest and purpose in

life to be measured.

With more education, hopelessness lessened. Only 2 matriculated students were normal, while 19 (48.5%) college students were. These results support prior research (i.e., Damon, 2008). Hopelessness affects age and education.

Table 6 compares the search for meaning, the presence of meaning, and hopelessness. Results suggest that meaning seeking increases hopelessness. Searching for purpose causes hopelessness. Meaning is opposed to hopelessness. As meaning grows, hopelessness lessens ($p=0.04$). This proves H1 and H2 and rejects H0. High scorers on the MLQ-P meaning in life scale (presence of meaning sub-scale) are more likely to score low on the BHS hopelessness scale (Beck et al., 1974).

Table 7 compares the quest for meaning sub-scale to demographic characteristics.

Men desire greater significance than women, a study finds.

18-year-olds are more inclined to seek significance than 19-year-olds.

The search for meaning declines with age. They're inversely related. Those with less education seek significance more than those with more.

Table 8 compares purpose in life with gender, age, and education. Men score well on the meaning sub-scale. Age increases presence. Higher presence with matriculation. This may be because the whole MLQ scale was employed to measure meaning and meaning seeking. Subscale objects overlap. Table 9 shows the Pearson Product Correlation between MLQ, its subscales, and BHS. Search for a meaning subscale correlates negatively with its existence. Meaning decreases as the quest for it increases. It's highly correlated negatively. The search for meaning and MLQ total score is positively correlated (0.78). Meaning seeking increases hopelessness. According to Table 7, the more one seeks significance, the more hopeless one feels. The positive link between MLQ score

and meaning. Meaning and hopelessness are opposed (-0.23). Low association between MLQ and BHS (i.e., 0.002).

The first two hypotheses were supported by frequencies, means, standard deviations, and mean differences. Pearson Product Correlation supports hypotheses. The present investigation rejected the null hypothesis and confirmed a variable relationship. Meaning in life and hopelessness are linked.

Conclusion:

The present study was conducted to assess the relationship between meaning in life and hopelessness and the search and presence of meaning with hopelessness individually. The study used two scales, i.e., the meaning in life questionnaire (MLQ), its subscales (presence and search), and the Beck hopelessness scale, to assess the purpose/meaning in life and hopelessness. It was an interesting study and important for an individual's psychological health. Some hypotheses were proved. A positive relationship between the search for meaning and hopelessness was found, as was a negative and significant relationship between the presence of meaning and hopelessness. It needs to be explored with other aspects of psychological health as well.

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