ABSTRACT

The aim of the present research is to examine the “effect of modernization and social freedom on women’s psychological wellbeing and quality of life”.

The chapter-1 of this thesis presents the introduction of the dependent and independent variables i.e. modernization, social freedom, psychological wellbeing and quality of life. Modernization is an important factor in today’s era. With the emergence of science and technology, traditional societies are changing into modern societies. In India, where traditionalism can be seen almost everywhere, with the modernization process things and attitudes can be seen changing. Dedeoglu (2009) in a study concluded that changing gender roles are likely to affect the family. In terms of the marital life, it was found that the husband-wife relationships are now established on the basis of tasks and responsibilities. For example, while men are responsible for bringing money to home, women are responsible for motherhood, childcare and household etc. Due to modernization, various changes occur in the science and technology, lifestyle and value system.

Women’s social freedom is associated with the right to bodily integrity and autonomy, to vote, to held public office, to work, to birth control, to have an abortion, to be free from rape, to equal pay, to own property, to serve in armed forces, to enter into legal contracts, and to have marital or parental rights. Nevertheless, the traditional patriarchal way of thinking that pervades almost every nook and corner of the world, view role of male to be that of bread earner whereas women are supposed to look after household chores. Such gender-based demarcation of societal roles label males as stronger sex whereas females are type casted as fairer sex or weaker sex, fit to be inferior and subservient to men. This gender-related division is further concretized when a certain role in society are thought to be suitable for males like working in industries, military forces etc. and confines women to softer roles and works involving less physical labour (Paramasivan, 2012).

The term psychological well-being connotes a wide range of meanings, usually associated with wellness. Most studies in the past defined “wellness” as not sick, as an absence of anxiety, depression, or other forms of mental problems. The psychological well-being includes the meaning of life, the absence of somatic symptoms, self-esteem, positive affect, daily activities, satisfaction, the absence of
suicidal ideas, personal control, social support, the absence of tension, and general efficiency (Bhogle and Prakash, 1995).

Psychological well-being consists of five sub-dimensions namely life satisfaction, efficiency, sociability, mental health and interpersonal relations. These dimensions have been described below:

1) Life satisfaction: the act of satisfying, or the state of being satisfied, the gratification of desire; contentment in possession and enjoyment; repose of mind resulting from compliance with its desire or demands.

2) Efficiency: the comparison of what is actually produced or performed with what can be achieved with same consumption of resources (money, time, labour, etc.). The quality of being efficient or producing an effect or effects; efficient power; effectual agency.

3) Sociability: the relative tendency or disposition to be sociable or associate with one’s fellows. The quality of state or being sociable.

4) Mental health: it is a term used to describe either a level of cognitive or emotional -being or an absence of a mental disorder. Good mental health is a state of well-being in which a person is able to cope with everyday events, thinks clearly, be responsible, meet challenges and have good relationships with others.

5) Interpersonal relations: it is an association between two or more people that may range from fleeting to enduring. This association may be based on love and liking, regular business interactions, or some other type of social commitment.

The quality of life (QOL) is the general well-being of individuals and societies. The quality of life has a wide range of contexts, including the fields of international development, healthcare, politics and employment. It is important not to mix up the concept of quality of life with a more recent growing area of health related Quality of life. It should not be confused with the concept of standard of living, which is based primarily on income. Quality of life is simultaneously about the needs and hopes of individual people and about the groups of people. It is also about an individual’s personal environment (the setting for their daily living) and it is about our shared global environment.
In the chapter-2, review of literature related to study variables is discussed. All the relevant studies related to modernization, social freedom, psychological well-being and quality of life are incorporated. Proposed Conceptual framework has been shown in this chapter.

Chapter 3 of the thesis discusses the methodology used, including the sample properties, data collection method and tools along with their reliability and validity. The scoring method is also included in chapter three. At the end of the chapter, a summary table showing sample distribution is given.

Four scales were used to collect the required information:

1- Modernization Scale by R.S. Singh. (1986)
2- Women’s Social Freedom Scale by L.I. Bhushan (1987)
3- Psychological well-being scale by D.S. Sisodia & Pooja Choudhary (2005)
4- Quality of Life Scale by B.L. Dubey, Padma Dwivedi and S. K. Sharma (2007)

For the data collection, permission was obtained from the principal of NREC College Khurja, Sacred heart Inter College, Sitapur and Mahila Degree College, Machhrehta through a personal visit. The consent was given from the principals of the respective colleges to allow their students to participate in the research. Consent from housewives was obtained personally by the researcher. In the above-mentioned colleges, the principals and Head of Department cooperated in the process of data collection. They were briefed about the research purpose and were assured that their anonymity will be maintained and their responses will be used for research purpose only. A total of 240 respondents participated in the research from all the three colleges, out of which 190 were female students and 50 were teachers. 100 respondents were included from the various department of District welfare Office. 120 housewives participated in the present research.

Initially, overall collected data comprised of 550 females, all of 22-60 years of age, from urban regions located in cities named Sitapur, Aligarh and a village named Machhrehta including other rural area named Khurja. Proper instructions were given to the women to receive adequate responses. The personal data sheet was distributed along with the questionnaires; included columns for information like name, age, religion, income, place of residence, education, email address and contact number. The respondents were asked to read each statement carefully and give a response on
each and every item. It was also told that there is no right or wrong answer. During the process of data scrutiny, out of 550 questionnaires, 70 questionnaires were excluded as they were incomplete and thus remaining 480 constituted the sample of the study.

In chapter 4 of this thesis, data was analysed in three sections. In section A t-test was used to determine the difference between three groups of women.

The main findings of the t-test were:

1- Dimensions of modernization-‘socio-religious’, ‘marriage’, ‘position of women’, and ‘education’ were found to have a significant difference in terms of the urban and rural status of women (table 4.2). The t-values for ‘socio-religious’, ‘marriage’, ‘position of women’, and ‘education’ were found to be significant. Urban women were found to be significantly higher than rural women on all the variables except on sociability and inter-personal relations. Social freedom in urban areas is higher than that in rural areas. Individual mean scores on all the independent variables were high for women of urban areas. In the case of dependent variables, dimensions of psychological well-being-‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘sociability’, ‘mental health’, and ‘inter-personal relations’ and ‘quality of life’- second dependent variable, all the dimensions differed significantly in terms of urban and rural status. Women in urban areas have better satisfaction, efficiency, mental health and quality of life, while rural women in terms of ‘sociability’ and ‘interpersonal relations’ scored higher than the urban women.

2- Mean values for dimensions of modernization- ‘marriage’, ‘position of was significantly higher for unmarried women as compared to married women (table 4.3). Mean value for ‘socio-religious’ and ‘education’ did not differ significantly among both the groups. However, the mean value for ‘social freedom’, was significantly higher for married women as compared to unmarried women. Among dependent variables, only ‘sociability’ was the dimension on which both married and unmarried women differed significantly. Married women were more sociable than unmarried women, this is because of difference in social freedom, as it can be seen from mean values of social freedom, married women enjoy high social freedom than unmarried women and thus sociability of
married women was also high. Both the groups of women did not differ significantly on ‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’, and ‘inter-personal relations’ and ‘quality of life’.

3- Table 4.4 showing that the dimensions of modernization-‘socio-religious’ ‘marriage’ and ‘education’ and ‘social freedom’ - second independent variable were found to be significantly higher among women with education ‘up to graduation’ as compared to women with education ‘up to high school’. This means that with high education; the level of modernization of women also increases. Among dependent variables, only ‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’, and ‘Interpersonal relations’ and ‘quality of life’ differed significantly in terms of educational level of women. ‘Satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’ and ‘quality of life’, was significantly higher among women with education ‘up to graduation’. However, the inter-personal relationship was significantly higher among women with education ‘up to high school’ than women with education up to graduation.

In the second step, Pearson’s product moment coefficients of correlation were calculated for all the three groups, to find out the significant relationship and direction of the relationship between the variables.

The main findings of the Pearson’s product moment coefficients of correlation were (Section A):

1- Table 4.5, shows inter correlation coefficients among different study variables for the total sample. ‘Marital status’, one of the demographic variables was found to have a positive and significant relationship with ‘marriage’, the position of women, overall modernization. It was found to have a negative but significant relationship with social freedom and sociability. ‘Qualification’, second demographic variable was found to have significant and positive relation with socio-religious, marriage, education, overall modernization, social freedom, satisfaction, efficiency, mental health, overall well-being and quality of life. However, it was found to have negative but significant correlation with place of residence, inter-personal relationship. ‘Place of residence’, was found to have positive and significant relationship with ‘sociability’ and ‘inter personal relationship’. It was negatively and significantly related with ‘qualification’,

‘Overall well-being’ and ‘quality of life’. ‘Socio-religious’—first dimension of modernization was found to have significant and positive relationship with ‘marriage’, ‘position of women’, ‘education’, ‘overall modernization’, ‘social freedom’, ‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’, ‘overall well – being’ and ‘quality of life’. It was negatively correlated with ‘sociability’ and ‘interpersonal relations’. ‘Marriage’ was found to have significant and positive relationship with ‘position of women’, ‘education’, ‘overall modernization’, ‘social freedom’, ‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’, ‘overall well – being’ and ‘quality of life’. It was negatively correlated with ‘sociability’ and ‘interpersonal relations’. ‘Position of women’ first dimension of modernization was found to have significant and positive relationship with ‘education’, ‘overall modernization’, ‘social freedom’, ‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’, ‘overall well – being’ and ‘quality of life’. It was negatively correlated with ‘sociability’ and ‘interpersonal relations’. Position of women’ first dimension of modernization was found to have significant and positive relationship with ‘education’, ‘overall modernization’, ‘social freedom’, ‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’, ‘overall well – being’ and ‘quality of life’. It was negatively correlated with ‘sociability’ and ‘interpersonal relations’. ‘Social freedom’—second independent variable of the study was found to have significant and positive relation with ‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’, ‘overall well – being’ and ‘quality of life’. It was negatively correlated with ‘sociability’ and ‘interpersonal relations’.

2- Table 4.6 shows correlation coefficients among dimensions of modernization and social freedom with dependent variables—‘psychological well-being and ‘quality of life’ among urban and rural women. Socio-religious was found to have a positive and significant relationship with efficiency and sociability among urban women while among rural women its relation was found to be negative with efficiency and positive with inter-personal relations. Among urban women attitude towards marriage was found to have a significant and positive relationship with sociability and mental health, however among rural women was found to have a negative relationship with efficiency and sociability. The position of women was found to have a negative relationship with efficiency and sociability among rural women, however, in the case of urban women, it was found to have a positive relationship with interpersonal relationship. Education was found to have a positive relationship with satisfaction and sociability among
urban women and a negative relationship was found with efficiency among rural women. Social freedom was found to have a positive relationship with efficiency and sociability among rural women and negative relationship with satisfaction.

3- Table 4.7 shows a correlation between modernization and social freedom with psychological well-being and quality of life among married and unmarried women. All the independent variables were found to have a significant relationship with dependent variables. However, the negative but significant relationship was found between ‘socio-religious attitude’, ‘marriage’, ‘position of women’, ‘education’ and ‘social freedom’ with ‘sociability’ and interpersonal relations’ among both the groups.

4- From table 4.8, values for correlation coefficient among women with different education qualification can be seen. ‘Socio-religious attitude’, ‘marriage’, ‘position of women’, ‘education’ and ‘social freedom’ were found to have a significant relationship with ‘satisfaction’, ‘efficiency’, ‘mental health’, and ‘quality of life’ among both the groups of women.

In section C, three step hierarchal regression analysis was used for predicting global psychological well-being and its dimensions for all the three groups. The quality of life of women for all the three groups was also predicted with the help of regression analysis.

The main findings of the hierarchal regression analysis:

1- From table 4.9 - 4.14, the values for hierarchal regression showing the predictive relationship of modernization and social freedom with the psychological well-being of urban and rural women can be seen. Among urban women, ‘education’ significantly and positively predicted psychological well-being. However, in the case of rural women, none of the variables significantly predicted psychological well-being. ‘Satisfaction’- dimension of psychological well-being among urban women is significantly predicted by ‘education’; however, among rural women, it is insignificant. Efficiency among urban women was predicted significantly by ‘socio-religious’ attitude, however, among rural women, none of the variables emerged as the significant predictors. ‘Sociability’ among urban women was predicted significantly and positively by socio-religious attitude and education,
however among rural women sociability was predicted significantly and positively by the position of women and socio-religious attitude. Sociability among rural women was significantly but negatively predicted by education. Among rural women, mental health was significantly impacted by ‘position of women’; however, among urban women, none of the variables emerged as the significant predictors.

2- Results for predicting psychological well-being among married and unmarried women have been shown in tables 4.15- 4.20. Psychological well-being among married women has been significantly and positively predicted by ‘education’ and ‘social freedom’, however, among unmarried women, none of the predicting variables emerged as the significant predictors. ‘Social freedom’ significantly and positively predicted efficiency among married and unmarried women. ‘Sociability’ among married women was significantly predicted by ‘education’, however among unmarried women ‘socio-religious’ emerged as the significant predictor. Among rural women ‘social freedom’ predicted ‘mental health’ significantly but negatively Among married women, ‘socio-religious’ and ‘position of women’ emerged as the significant predictors for inter-personal relations. However, among unmarried women ‘social freedom’ emerged as the significant but negative predictors of ‘inter-personal relationship.

3- The values for regression analysis for predicting psychological well-being and its various dimensions, among women with different qualification have been shown in table 4.21 to 4.26. Among women with education up to graduation ‘socio-religious’ attitude emerged as the significant and positive predictor of psychological well-being. Among women with education up to high school and women with education up to graduation, ‘efficiency was predicted significantly and positively by ‘social freedom’. ‘Sociability’ – dimension of psychological well-being was negatively and significantly predicted by ‘position of women’ among women with education up to graduation. ‘Social freedom’ positively and significantly predicted ‘sociability’ of women with education up to graduation. The inter-personal relationship was positively predicted by the position of women among women with education up to high school.

4- From table 4.27, values of predicting variables can be seen. ‘Quality of life’- second dependent dimension of the study was found to be insignificantly
predicted by any of the dimensions of modernization and social freedom among urban women, however in the case of rural women ‘position of women’ significantly and positively predicted quality of life. This shows that among rural women position of women is improving with time, therefore it emerged as the significant predictor of quality of life. With changing time, rural women who were bound to stay at home, follow strict rules have now attained at least much better position and freedom compared to earlier days. This shows that traditional societies are adapting to new cultural and social norms which urban population has adapted much earlier. Thus with these changing values, women’s position in rural areas is also improving, therefore the quality of life is positively and significantly predicted by ‘position of women’.

5- From table 4.28, results of regression analysis can be seen. None of the predicting variables emerged as the significant predictors of ‘Quality of life’ among both married and unmarried women. Mean for the quality of life among unmarried women was found to be higher than the mean of married women, which was although insignificant. This may be because of the reason that women among both the groups enjoyed the almost equal quality of life and therefore all the predictors failed to have any effect on quality of life of this group.

6- Results showing values for predicting the quality of life among women with different levels of education have been shown in table 4.29. None of the independent variable and its dimensions was found to be significantly predicting the quality of life of women among both the groups. However, if we look at the mean for the quality of life among women with education up to high school and women with education up to graduation, they were found to significantly differ from each other. Mean score for women with education up to graduation was high. Maybe there were some other underlying variables which we didn’t include in our study, due to which none of the predicting variables emerged as the significant predictors of quality of life.

7- The values for regression analysis for predicting psychological wellbeing and its various dimensions and quality of life among women with demographic variables can be seen from table 4.9 – 4.15. Among urban women, ‘marital status significantly and positively predicted psychological well-being. However,
in the case of rural women, only ‘qualification’ significantly and positively predicted psychological well-being. This shows that even among rural women, with changing time attitude towards education is improving and thus their psychological wellbeing is also improved. Among rural women satisfaction is significantly but negatively predicted by marital status and positively predicted by qualification, however, in the case of urban women, none of the demographic variables emerged as the significant predictors. Sociability among urban women was predicted significantly and positively by qualification. None of the variables emerged as predictors for rural women in case of sociability. Mental health among urban women was significantly predicted by ‘marital status’, none of the demographic variables emerged as the significant predictors of the mental health of rural women. None of the demographic variables emerged as the significant predictors of interpersonal relationship and quality of life among urban and rural women.

8- ‘Qualification’ emerged as the significant but negative predictor of psychological well-being among married and unmarried women. Place of residence emerged as the negative but significant predictor of satisfaction efficiency, mental health and quality of life, among married and unmarried women. Place of residence emerged as the significant and positive predictor of sociability among married women, among rural women qualification emerged as the significant predictor of sociability. Place of residence emerged as the significant and positive predictor of the interpersonal relationship among married and unmarried women.

9- ‘Place of residence’ emerged as the significant but negative predictor of psychological well-being and satisfaction among both the groups of women. Among women with education up to graduation, marital status emerged as the significant and positive predictor of psychological well-being. Efficiency among both the group of women was significantly but negatively predicted by place of residence, however in the case of women with education up to high school, marital status emerged as a negative predictor of efficiency. Place of residence emerged as a significant and positive predictor of sociability among both groups of women, marital status emerged as the negative and significant predictors of sociability among with education up to high school and among women with
education up to graduation. Place of residence predicted mental health and quality of significantly but negatively among both groups of women. Place of residence predicted interpersonal relations positively and significantly, among both groups of women. Marital status among women with education up to graduation emerged as the significant and positive predictor of interpersonal relations. The quality of life among women with education up to graduation was significantly and positively predicted by marital status.

In chapter 5 of this thesis discussion of the results with reasons for the findings of the results have been given.

In chapter 6 of this thesis; a table of significant predictors and overall conclusion of the study have been mentioned along with the implication, limitations and recommendations for the future research.