CHAPTER – V
DISCUSSION

The aim of the present research was to find out the relationship between Life Attitude and certain personality variables among undergraduate students. Stepwise regression analyses were conducted to explore predictors of Life attitudes. The predictor variables in these regression analyses included twenty personality dimensions. When we look at the results of correlational and regressional analyses on total sample, we find that Leadership (Ld) and Guilt-proneness (Gp) emerged as the leading predictors of various dimensions of Life Attitudes. Results on subsamples (social science and males groups) also depicts that Leadership and Guilt-proneness are the potential predictors of Life Attitudes. Leadership along with Guilt-proneness contribute significantly to goal seeking dimension of LAP (Total sample, Social Science group and male groups), will to meaning (Social Science group) and composite Life attitude scores (Total sample, Social Science group and male group). As far as the knowledge of the present researcher goals, no study has been conducted previously to explore the relationship of Leadership or Guilt-proneness with Life attitude.
A leader is one who assumes responsibility and takes blame upon himself for anything that happens wrong in the group. The tendency to be able to accept blame obviously makes a person guilt-prone. So there is significant positive relationship guilt-proneness and leadership.

Leadership emerged as the dominant predictor of Life Purpose (Total sample, social science, male and female groups), Death acceptance (Total sample and female group), will to meaning (Social Science group), Goal seeking (Total sample, female and social science groups) and composite life attitude scores (Total sample, male and social science groups). Significant effect of leadership on life purpose in four groups show that leaders have high purpose in life, have definite goals and have a sense of directedness. They feel there is a purpose of life having future aims and objectives. They are also aware of Death and accept it.

Leadership along with Tension (Tn) and General ability (Ga) contribute significantly to death acceptance (Total sample), which shows that leadership along with tension and general ability prepares one for death acceptance.

A comparative look on the results of male and female groups on the measure of leadership show that leadership contribute significantly to life purpose in both the sexes. However, leadership predict goal seeking in males and Death acceptance in females.
In Science group, leadership does not make significant contribution to any of the Life attitude component. However, in social science group, leadership contribute significantly to life purpose, Goal seeking and composite Life attitude scores. This result shows that science students have less time to indulge in social activities and lack of opportunities for the development of Leadership activities comparatively to social science students.

Leadership quality is associated with boldness, dynamism and responsibility for others as well as for oneself. In other words, leadership quality, is to great extent associated with the solution of existential problems. This is the reason, the leadership contributes high on most of the measures of Life attitude profile among different groups.

Guilt-proneness contribute significantly to existential vacuum (social science group), will to meaning (Total sample, science & male group), Goal seeking (Total sample, male, science and social science groups) and composite Life attitude scores (Total sample, male and social science groups). Which shows that guilt-prone persons have high will to meaning and high goal seeking attitude. Guilt-proneness leads one towards more responsibility, including towards one’s own existence. A guilt-prone person is more likely to develop will to meaning and goal seeking.
Tension emerged as the potential predictor of existential vacuum (Total sample, social science and male groups), Death acceptance (Total sample, social science group), will to meaning (Science group), and composite Life attitude scores (Science group). An interesting result is obtained on the measure of tension. Tension has been found to contribute positively and significantly to existential vacuum. It reveals that students with high tension have high existential problems.

Significant and negative contribution of tension on the measure of death acceptance shows that students with high tension have low death acceptance. A significant and negative contribution has been found on the measure of will to meaning and total Life attitude scores among science students. Such a finding is consistent with Frankl’s (1963) theoretical position that a certain amount of tension is necessary to bring meaning to life. Without such ‘noo-dynamics” the meaning and purpose of life would be degenerative or static rather than regenerative or dynamic.

Maturity contributes significantly and negatively to existential vacuum (female group), will to meaning (Science group), goal seeking (female group), future meaning to fulfill (Science group) and composite Life attitude scores (Science group). The findings show that Maturity contributes highly to life attitudes in science students but for social science students maturity did not contribute significantly to any
component of the life attitudes. It is also noticeable that Maturity is the single predictor of existential vacuum and goal seeking among females. However, maturity as a personality variable is a negative predictor on all the measures in different groups, discussed above. This shows that high maturity goes with less existential vacuum, low will to meaning, goal seeking and future meaning to fulfill. Those students, who are highly mature, do not have existential vacuum is quite understandable. Highly mature students have already sorted out their goal (at least for the time being) and not any more after goal seeking. The sample is from student population, who are already enrolled in colleges and pursuing their career in different branches of knowledge. Similarly mature students have less will to meaning which could also be due to the same reason that they have already discovered the meaning for their 'present time' by having a definite goal. This seems to be the only plausible reason for negative contribution of maturity to different dimensions of Attitude towards life.

When we look at the results of total sample, we find that mental health does not contribute significantly to life attitude. However, mental health is a potential predictor of life attitude profile (female group) and its three components viz. existential vacuum (male group), life control (Science and female groups) and future meaning to fulfill (female group).
Significant contribution of mental health on the measure of existential vacuum among males show that students with high mental health have high existential problem. Among females high mental health is associated with less control on their life and low desire for future meaning to fulfill. In science group also mental health contribute negatively to life control. The result is against the notion of Allport, Rogers, Fromm and Maslow etc. who describe the psychologically healthy person is in conscious control of his life and is able to direct his behaviour and does not live in the past, his orientation is towards future goal.

Mental health is a negative predictor of life control and future meaning to fulfill. Students with high mental health may think that their life is not under control. This thinking can be real or imaginary. The result mental health is a negative predictor of future meaning to fulfill is restricted to female group.

The result on mental health is confusing and it could be due to factors related to the sample used in the present study and it may not be generalized population.

Enthusiasm has emerged as a negative predictor of Life purpose (total sample), future meaning to fulfill (total sample) and composite life attitude scores (male group). Thus high enthusiasm is associated with low life purpose and low future meaning to fulfill. Enthusiasm may lead to
lack of concentration on issues which need reflective thoughts e.g. future meaning to fulfill and purpose in life. The attention of an enthusiastic person is diversified and often changes from one to another goal. This may be the reason for negative contribution of enthusiasm to life purpose and future meaning to fulfill.

General ability is the second best predictor of existential vacuum (along with Tension), and third predictor of death acceptance (leadership and Tension being the 1st and 2nd best predictor respectively) in total sample. General ability is also the third best predictor of existential vacuum (first two predictors are Tension and Guilt-proneness) among social science group. The correlation between general ability and existential vacuum in both the groups (Total sample and social science group) is negative, which reveals that students with high general ability suffered less from existential vacuum. High general ability is associated high death acceptance (Total sample and social science group). Students with high general ability have courage to accept death.

The effect of morality has been found to be statistically significant at .05 level on the measure of life purpose (male group) and Goal seeking (social science group). It means that morality plays an important role in influencing the life purpose and goal seeking. Further analysis revealed that students, who have high morality were found to have high life
purpose and high goals in future. Ryff (1989), Ryff et al. (1994) and Ryff and Keyes (1995) in their studies found a significant relationship between morality and life purpose. Dough and Wright (1977) concludes that moral commitment paired with spiritual commitment is indicative of meaning of life.

Achievement motivation has been found to contribute significantly and positively to life purpose in females. Reker and Peacock (1981) found that well motivated people scored high on existential meaning and life purpose. Damon and Colleague (2003) described that purpose during youth leads to achievement and high self-esteem.

Achievement motivation is a negative predictor of existential vacuum in science students. The finding is understandable as students with high achievement motivation will suffer less from existential vacuum. The result is in accordance with the finding of Lodzinki (1979, in Recker and Peacock, 1981). High achievement indirectly shows that the person is not satisfied and feels a lack in some area. This may ultimately produce existential vacuum.

The results of regression analysis shows that the effect of innovation on life control has found to be significant and positive in science group. It leads to infer that higher the innovative quality among students have high control on their lives. The above finding is on expected lines Science
students have experimental thinking, having liberal ideas. They do not follow traditions and prefer to break with established ways of doing things. These qualities ultimately make science students have high control on their lives.

The overall picture shows that leadership and guiltproneness have been emerged as most important determines of attitudes towards life. These variables have shown positive contribution to life attitudes and its components. This leads to the conclusion that these variables have significant influence on making positive attitudes towards life among undergraduate students. However boldness, adaptability, self-control, shrewdness, suspiciousness, social warmth, imagination, self-sufficiency and competitiveness appeared to be weak predictors of life attitudes.

The next chapter deals with summary and findings.