SUMMARY

It is not surprising that the history of human existence abounds with inquires about the nature of happiness and good life. The notion, that what matters in life is not just to live but to live quality life, is perhaps the oldest one. People’s perceptions, thoughts, feelings and actions have an impact on their living conditions. They determine the happiness or quality of their life. Quality of life is an umbrella concept that refers to all aspects of a person’s life, including physical health, psychological well-being, social well-being, financial well-being, family relationships, friendships, work, leisure and the like. Well-being is the predictor of happiness. Well-being means not only being physically healthy but it connotes individual’s feeling of contentment, happiness, satisfaction with life experiences and one’s role in the world of work in terms of physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual aspects. Well-being is a broad category of phenomena that includes people’s emotional responses, domain satisfaction and global judgment of life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). In general, well-being has two distinguishable aspects. There is subjective and objective well-being. Subjective well-being is a total evaluation of one’s life, whereas, objective well-being can be divided into physically and socially good conditions. The distinction between objective and subjective definitions of well-being is provided by Sumner (1996). It is based on the selection process of the criteria that are used to judge individuals’ well-being. To be precise, subjective well-being (SWB) consists of two distinctive components: an affective part, which refers to both the presence of positive affect (PA) and absence of negative affect (NA), and a cognitive part. The affective part is self-evaluation guided by emotions and feelings whereas the cognitive
part is an appraisal of one’s life for which people judge the extent to which their life so far measures up to their expectations and resembles their envisioned ideal life (Diener et al., 1984).

SWB is one of the three major ways to assess the quality of life of societies along with economic and social indicators (Diener & Suh., 1998). So, abundant SWB is a necessary if not a sufficient characteristic of good society and the good life. Demographic factors such as income, marital status influence SWB (Bradburn, 1969; Andrews & Withey, 1976; Cambell et al., 1976). A number of other factors such as mental health (Jahoda, 1958), adaptation to conditions (Lucas et al., 2002), temperament (Lykken & Tellegen, 1996) and goal strivings (Emmon, 1986) substantially influence the SWB. Psychological factors like personality and self-esteem did show a significant relationship with SWB (Diener et al., 1994).

The interaction of one’s personality, self-esteem, personal goals and available resources affects SWB and highlights the importance of these variables across life span of all human beings including convicts, for whom these parameters gain even more importance.

A convict is “a person found guilty of a crime and sentenced by a court” or “a person serving sentence in prison” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/convicts). Crimes are the acts that are forbidden and punished by law. These acts may threaten the well-being of the society, or injure any of its members. Crime has been a baffling problem ever since the dawn of human civilization and man’s efforts to grapple with this problem have partially succeeded. Crime, like any other action of the body, is a manifestation of thoughts in the mind. Convicts are the persons who have committed crimes and imprisonment is the method of dealing with such people. Before we can start concocting a crime solution that actually works, we need to dig for the root causes of crime. Only then we can find the right solutions that deal directly with the root source of the problem, as opposed to limiting ourselves to dealing with the symptoms through
punishment measures.

The investigation has been taken up to investigate into the subjective well-being of convicts in relation to their psychological and social variable, so as to have an insight as to how we can bring about possible changes in current scenario in a positive direction. Hence, the researcher has taken up the following problem entitled: “PSYCHO-SOCIAL CORRELATES OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AMONG CONVICTS”

5.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study are laid down as below:

1. To prepare socio-demographic profile of convicts.
2. To study subjective well-being of convicts.
3. To study the big five traits of personality of convicts.
4. To study the self-esteem of convicts.
5. To study subjective well-being of convicts in relation to psychological variables, namely, personality factors and self-esteem.
6. To study the subjective well-being of convicts in relation to social variables like family, marital status, educational status, employment status.
7. To identify significant predictors of subjective well-being of convicts.

5.2 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY


2. Well-being of convicts will differ significantly with high and low level of Self-Esteem.
3. Well-being of convicts will relate significantly with different social variables like age (young vs. old), sex (male vs. female), type (joint vs. nuclear family) and size (small vs. large family) of family, marital status (married vs. unmarried, divorcee, and widow), educational status (educated vs. uneducated) and employment status (employed vs. unemployed).

5.3 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The focus of the present study was to explore the Psycho-social correlates of well-being among convicts of Punjab. The present study, keeping in view the constraints on the part of investigator, was delimited in following manner:

1. Convicts were the natives of Punjab.
2. Their age was between 25 to 50 years.
3. They had been sentenced for more than 5 years of imprisonment.

5.4 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED

Some of the terms used in this study have other, more common, generic meanings, but for this study they will be defined as follows:

Convicts: A convict is “a person found guilty of a crime and sentenced by a court” or” a person serving sentence in prison”. Crimes are the acts that are forbidden and punished by law. Psychologically, the criminals are considered as deviants. From the psychological point of view, a deviant is a person whose behavior or biological traits are vastly different from a person.

Subjective Well-Being: Subjective well-being is a total evaluation of one’s own life according to one’s own norms and standards. Subjective well-being is multidimensional and encompassing all aspects of human life such as life satisfaction, pleasant emotions, feelings
of fulfillment, satisfaction in the domains like marriage and work, respect and good social relationships and low levels of unpleasant emotions.

**Personality**: Personality structure means the traits or big five factors of an individual’s which are known as NEO or NEOAC where N is denoted for Neuroticism which represents individual differences in the tendency to experience distress, frustration and self-consciousness. E is for Extraversion which is characterized by habitual outgoingness, venturing forth with careless confidence in the external world and Introversion is reflected by a keen interest in one’s own psyche and often preferring alone. O is for openness includes active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness of inner feelings and curiosity about both inner and outer worlds. A is for Agreeableness includes altruism, caring, emotional support and indifference to others. C is for Conscientiousness means being organized, systematic, efficient, practical and steady.

**Self-Esteem**: Self-esteem is defined as a person's overall evaluation or appraisal of his or her own worth. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs (for example, "I am competent-incompetent") and emotions (for example, triumph-despair, pride-shame). Behaviour may reflect self-esteem (for example, assertiveness-shyness, and confidence-caution).

**Social Variables**: Social variables includes age of the convict whether young or old; sex either male or female; type of family: joint or nuclear family and small size family of 5 members or large family of more than 5 members; marital status, married or unmarried; educational status, educated or uneducated and employment status, employed or unemployed.

### 5.5 METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Descriptive method of research was used to study the psycho-social correlates of subjective well-being among convicts. It has undoubtedly been the most popular and widely used research method in education. The method requires sample and certain research tools for the
conduct of study.

5.5.1 Research Tools Used

- Subjective Well-being Inventory (SUBI) by Nagpal and Sell, (1985) was used for SWB evaluation
- The NEO Five Factor Personality Inventory by McCrae and Costa (1989) was used for personality assessment of convicts.
- Self-Esteem Inventory by Stanley Coopersmith (1981) was used for self-esteem assessment of convicts.
- Personal Information Datasheet was prepared by investigator herself.

5.5.2 Population of the Study and Sampling

The population of the study was the convicts housed in Central jail, Patiala. The purposive sample of 200 convicts, all natives of Punjab irrespective of their gender with age between 25 to 50 years, sentenced for more than 5 years of imprisonment, was taken up for the study.

5.5.3 Statistical Techniques Used

After scoring as per standard procedures, the obtained scores were statistically treated in order to achieve the objectives of the present study. Descriptive statistics namely mean, median, mode and standard deviation was used to study the subjective well-being pattern, five-factors of personality and self-esteem of convicts. Percentage analysis was done to prepare socio-demographic profile of the convicts. The use of t-test was made to study the psychological correlates of subjective well-being among convicts. The t-test was also used to study the social correlates of subjective well-being among convicts. Correlation was used to study the relationship of psychological variables i.e. five factors of personality and self-esteem with subjective well-being of convicts. Further regression analysis was done to find out predictors of subjective well-being among convicts.
5.6 CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of analysis and interpretation of data following conclusion are drawn:

5.6.1 Percentage Analysis

1. Majority of convicts were old i.e., between 35 to 50 years.
2. Majority of convicts were male.
3. Majority of convicts were undergoing less than 14 years of imprisonment.
4. Majority of convicts were married.
5. Almost equal %age of convicts was residing in rural and urban areas.
6. Almost equal %age of convicts was from small and large families.
7. Majority of convicts were from joint family.
8. Majority of convicts were literate.
9. Majority of convicts were employed.

5.6.2 Descriptive Statistics

1. Majority of convicts possessed a low level of subjective well-being.
2. Majority of convicts possessed a high level of neuroticism.
3. Majority of convicts possessed an average level of extraversion.
4. Majority of convicts possessed an average level of openness to experience.
5. Majority of convicts possessed a low level of agreeableness.
6. Majority of convicts possessed a low level of conscientiousness.
7. Majority of convicts possessed a low level of self-esteem.

5.6.3 Differences in Subjective Well-Being of Convicts in relation to their Psychological Variables

1. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being of convicts with low and high neurotic level.
2. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being of introvert and extrovert
convicts.

3. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being of convicts with low and high level of openness to experience.

4. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being of convicts with low and high agreeableness level.

5. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being of convicts with low and high level of conscientiousness.

6. There was a significant difference in subjective well-being of convicts with low and high self-esteem level.

5.6.4 Differences in Subjective Well-Being of Convicts in relation to their Social Variables

1. There was no significant effect of age difference on subjective well-being among convicts.

2. There was no significant effect of gender difference on subjective well-being among convicts.

3. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being among convicts coming from either joint or nuclear family.

4. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being among convicts coming from small or large family.

5. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being among convicts with different marital status.

6. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being among educated and uneducated convicts.

7. There was no significant difference in subjective well-being among employed and unemployed convicts.
5.6.5 Predictors of Subjective Well-Being of Convicts: Co-relational and Regression Analysis

1. There was a negative and significant relationship between neuroticism and subjective well-being (SWB).
2. There was no significant relationship between extraversion and subjective well-being (SWB).
3. There was no significant relationship between openness to experience and subjective well-being (SWB) among convicts.
4. There was no significant but negative relationship between agreeableness and subjective well-being (SWB).
5. There was no significant relationship between conscientiousness and subjective well-being (SWB) among convicts.
6. There was a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and subjective well-being (SWB).
7. Self-esteem emerged as the most significant predictor of subjective well-being among convicts.

5.7 DISCUSSION

Understanding subjective well-being (SWB) had historically been a core human endeavour and presently spans fields from management to mental health. Previous meta-analyses had indicated that personality traits were one of the best predictors of SWB. Still, these past results indicated only a moderate relationship, weaker than suggested by several lines of reasoning. In the present study, the results present a somewhat similar picture. Neuroticism showed a negative but significant relationship with subjective well-being. Earlier studies by various researchers (DeNeve and Cooper, 1998; Furnham and Chang, 1999; Hayes and
Joseph, 2003; Steel, Schmidt and Shultz, 2008) supported this fact. Higher the level of neuroticism in a convict lower is his/her subjective well-being. Self-esteem came out to be the strongest predictor of well-being in convicts during the present study. Lesser the self-esteem, lesser the subjective well-being thereby leading to disturbed mental and emotional state of a person. Similar findings were observed by earlier researchers also (Kernis et al., 1993; Pinquart, 1998; Robins et al., 2001; Betton, 2004; Joshanloo and Afshari, 2009). Thus, the above found results did justify the first two hypotheses of the present study. Our third and last hypothesis, regarding social factors having an impact on subjective well-being of convicts, stood rejected in the light of obtained results. The researcher found no significant relationship between well-being of convicts with different social variables like age, sex, type and size of family, marital status, educational status and employment status. This may be attributed to the small sample size. Also, convicts who were the natives of Punjab only, were taken into consideration. Earlier studies although did show some impact of social factors like education, employment, marital status etc. on well-being but that too in a very lesser degree as compared to psychological factors like personality traits and self-esteem (Campbell et al., 1976; Veenhoven et al., 1994; Diener and Suh, 1998; Argyle, 1999; Amato and Sobolewski, 2001; Cheng and Furnham, 2003; Qing-guo et al., 2010). Emotional and mental state of prisoners was recognised as an important element influencing behaviour and well-being. Studies conducted by Watson & Clark, 1984; Biggam and Power, 1997; Kirkcaldy and Brown, 2000; Lindquist, 2000; Wells, 2000; Kaur, 2004; MacDonald et al, 2005 and many more showed the role of personality, lack of social support and stressful environment at prison leading to feeling of inadequacy and low self-esteem, thereby affecting the well-being of convicts. The need for a study like the present one was, thus, quite clear. This analysis enabled a focus on conditions critical to successful reintegration for ex-prisoners.
5.8 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Crime is a national phenomenon which constantly changes with social change. Crime and criminals have become a part and parcel of present day world. The efforts of the humans to tackle this problem have only partially succeeded. Convicts form a noticeable portion of today’s society. After serving the punishment they have to come back to the main stream of the society. After release it is expected from them that they join the main stream and become useful members of the society and live a life of dignity and respect. The importance of prisoner re-entry as a societal concern cannot be overstated.

On the basis of the results of the present study, following educational implications have been laid down with supports from earlier studies:

1. Government must take effective measures for the rehabilitation of the convicts to make them become a useful part of the society and make their transition from prison to community a bit easy (Petersilia, 2003).

2. Post-release success often depends on the nature and quality of services and support provided in the community, and here is where least amount of societal attention and resources are typically directed (Petersilia, 2003). Thus, more attention is required at that level.

3. Having employment is perhaps the most critical aspect of post-prison adjustment. Cramichael and Ward (2000); Gould et al. (2002) showed a positive link between unemployment and crime. Job training, employment counselling, and employment placement programs must all be seen as essential parts of an effective reintegration plan.

4. Prisoners having signs or symptoms of mental illness or developmental disability while incarcerated must be given specialized transitional services to facilitate their reintegration into the free world. Gaes et al, (2000) reported in their study that the
medical/ mental problems of prisoners should be addressed first, before seeking to train them for work.

5. Special meditation and yoga classes should be organised during imprisonment to enhance the well-being of the convicts. Khurana and Dhar, (2000) showed the positive effect of Vipassana meditation on quality of life, subjective well-being and criminal propensity of convicts.

6. Counselling sessions with trained psychotherapists for ex-convicts and their families should be arranged by governmental and non-governmental agencies in which the normal adaptations after prison life should be the focus of discussion, rather than traditional models of psychotherapy (Lindquist, 2000).

7. Adequate therapeutic and rehabilitative resources must be provided to address the needs of the large numbers of mentally ill and developmentally disabled prisoners (Helliwell, 2011).

8. Education plays an important role to enhance your self-esteem. Coaching classes should be conducted during imprisonment and after release to boost their self-esteem thereby, increasing subjective well-being (Wells, 2000).

9. Effective vocational training should be arranged during imprisonment to boost the confidence of the convicts (Helliwell, 2011).

10. Weatherburn and Lind (1998) found poverty, single parent families, crowded dwellings and unhealthy environment as the causes of juvenile participation in the crime. Convicts should be provided with hygienic, healthy congenial physical environment during confinement.

11. Social support plays a central role in prison life and upon release. Ex-prisoners with greater family support have shown greater success in reintegration in the form of more stable housing, more stable (or higher rates of) employment, a lower level of continued
criminal activity, and reduced drug use than those with less family support. *Lindquist* (2000); *Olweus* (2005) found that social integration play an important role in maintaining healthy mental well-being of the convicts.

12. *Betton* (2004) found Spirituality as the strongest predictor of well-being. Hence, Spirituality is another big factor which enhances the subjective well-being of a person. So, proper spiritual training should be given to prisoners before and after release (*Maruna*, 2001).

13. Psychologists, educationists and counsellors should help to improve the well-being and personality structure of convicts by providing them guidance and by organising various programmes related to their overall development. This was shown by *Harreveld et al* (2007) in their study regarding correctional facilities in Netherland.

14. After successful re-entry, a follow up programme should be done by government and N.G.Os to prevent committing the crime again. (*Winnick and Bodkin*, 2008).

15. Proper health services should be provided during confinement. (*Harreveld et al*, 2007).

### 5.9 Suggestions for Further Research

Considering the results, conclusions and limitations of the present study, following suggestions are laid down for carrying out further research:

1. The present study was undertaken on convicts that are natives of Punjab. Similar studies may be carried out state wise and nationwide to control this menace.

2. This study was done on convicts between 25 to 50 years of age. Similar studies may be conducted on juvenile criminals

3. Research can be undertaken to study relationship of low self-esteem and other parameters which results in lowering the well-being and instigating a person to become a convict.
4. Experimental studies can be conducted to find out the ways of improving of self-esteem and subjective well-being of convicts.

5. The present study focused on limited sample from Central Jail, Patiala. The results of the study need to be understood in the light of small sample. Similar studies can be conducted on a larger sample.

6. A study may be conducted to find out the role of family, friends and environment with self-esteem and subjective well-being of convicts.

7. Research can be undertaken to study relationship of educational correlates of well-being among convicts.

8. A study may be conducted to find out the impact of physiological status upon well-being of convicts.

9. Twin studies may be taken up to study the role of heredity and environment on the well-being of convicts.

10. Research studies may be conducted on the coping strategies adopted by high and low well-being convicts during and after confinement.

11. A study may be conducted to find out the relationship between emotional state and other variables influencing the well-being of convict’s successful reintegration.

12. A study may be planned to find out the reasons for white collared crime done by highly educated persons.

13. A study may be conducted to find out the relationship of well-being with some other independent variables such as stress, physical disability, job satisfaction, self-efficacy and emotional stability in convicts.