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Debbie Zothanpari
Abstract

Meaning in life has been consistently linked to overall well-being. Midlife is a normative developmental stage and further research is still required, there is literature on the changes that are characteristic of this stage in life and in particular to the nature of transition to the second half of life. This study explored the meaning Mizo women assign to midlife and examined the contribution of demographic, psychological, social and religious variables to women in midlife living in Mizoram. This is done through a quantitative questionnaire and follow-up qualitative interviews. Seven hundred and forty three women in midlife completed the quantitative questionnaire and five women participated in the qualitative in-depth interview. For the qualitative analysis thematic network analysis was applied to extract themes. Descriptive, chi-square test and regression analysis for the quantitative questionnaire revealed the following: meaning in life is found in high education, income, religion, hobby and post menopause for the midlife Mizo women. In depth interviews arrived at four themes: Family care and support give meaning, Serving God provides purpose in life, Searching for meaning is a life long project, Midlife provides independence and the ability to contribute to society. The findings of this study provide important implications for counsellors and psychotherapists who work with adult women. This study also revealed that today Mizo women in their midlife were active and vibrant quite unlike the cultural stereotype that exists that see midlife women as unattractive, menopausal, frustrated and depressed. This may also raise consciousness to health care planners to develop effective awareness on midlife women’s health and develop programs to promote wellness.
Keywords: Logotherapy, Search for meaning, Meaning in Life Questionnaire, Positive psychology, Midlife Mizo women, Thematic network analysis
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Glossary

*Chapchar kut*  The name of the Mizo spring festival held between the cuttings and the burning of the jhums.

*Kut*  Festival

*Lusei*  Lusei is one of the names of the tribes in Mizo community from which the English word ‘Lushai’ is derived.

*Mizo*  Literally means highlander.

*Nuthlawi*  Widow

*Tlawmngaihna*  To be self sacrificing, unselfish, self-denying, persevering.

*Zawlbuk*  The large house in a Mizo village where all the unmarried young men of the community sleep at night.