

Dehraj et al., 2017

Volume 3 Issue 2, pp. 246 - 272

Date of Publication: 06th September, 2017

DOI-<https://dx.doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2017.32.246272>

This paper can be cited as: Dehraj, D., Dehraj, N., Mansoor, N., & Arshi, S. (2017). An Exploratory Study of Relationship Between Psychological Well-Being and Swearing. *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(2), 246-272.

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND SWEARING

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Abstract

The aim of the research was to explore the relationship between Psychological well-being and swearing. Psychological wellbeing is a construct that underlies human capacity to engage and function effectively in existing challenges of life whereas swearing as a mode of communication has been prevailing among the young adults. To assess the relationship, it was hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship between Psychological well-being and swearing, explaining a triangulated relation between psychological well-being, emotional expression

(catharsis) and swearing. A total sample of 105 participants falling between the age ranges of 18 to 25 years was selected through convenience sampling from different universities in Karachi. The two measures that were used in the study included Normative Swearing Scale (NSC) and Ryff's Psychological Well Being Scale... For the statistical analysis, data was entered in the Statistical Package for Social Analysts (SPSS) software and results were acquired by using correlation. Pearson correlation was calculated and the results obtained were found to be nonsignificant ($r = -.139$). It explained that there is no relationship between psychological wellbeing and swearing. However, results proved that males use more swear words than females. Moreover, purpose in life was seen to be negatively correlated with swearing. The results suggested that Psychological well-being and Swearing has no significant correlation but it reflected the gender difference in swearing.

Keywords

Swearing, Psychological Wellbeing, Gender, Linguistics, Emotions

1. Introduction

Language, of course, is a tool that humans utilize to share information, gain knowledge, express emotions and thoughts and build a social identity. As Benjamin Whorf (1957) said "Language shapes thoughts and emotions, determining one's perception of reality". Language does not only give words to feelings, it also profiles the nature of those feelings. Keeping in mind general functions of language, Williams (1993) reiterated the two basic functions of language: Communication and Expression. The relationship of these two functions comprise of social and individual dimension respectively. Our focus, with regards to the study in discussion, would be on the act of expression in individual dimension and its effects on psychological wellbeing. The objective of this study involves a triangulated relationship between psychological well-being, emotional expression (catharsis) and swearing.

1.1 Psychological Wellbeing

World Health Organization (WHO) states that mental health is "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community". Our well-being and Mental health play fundamental roles in our collective and individual capacity to live, earn, emote and think. In psychology, research has historically been

focused upon deviance, psychopathology and unhappiness, all in the form of negative constructs (Diener & Seligman, 2002; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In order to establish a positive construct of human psychological functioning, empirical researches were conducted to promote the concept of wellness. For that a multi-facet construct known as Psychological Well-Being (PWB) was conceptualized by researchers in the field of psychology.

A profound understanding of PWB as a construct is imperative, since literature provides many other concepts that are used interchangeably with psychological well-being. Concepts like life satisfaction, subjective well-being, emotional health, and mental health have been used as synonyms in the literature for psychological well-being. However a distinctive difference about psychological well-being as a concept exists.

If we delve into it further on, several definitions attempt to define psychological wellbeing in different ways. Huppert (2009) describes it as combination of feeling good and functioning effectively, referring PWB to be about our lives essentially going well. Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff (2002) defined it as engagement with existential encounters of life. Endeavouring to operationalize the construct, Ryff conceived six domains of psychological well-being: Autonomy, Self-acceptance, Positive relations with others, Purpose in life, environmental mastery and personal growth (Ryff (1989) and Ryff and Keyes (1995).

These six domains postulate that individuals attempts to form and retain relationships (Positive relations with others), individuals try to feel good about themselves in face adversities and their own limitations (Self-acceptance), human beings also tend to modify their surroundings to achieve their needs and desires (Environmental Mastery). Along with that individuals seek autonomy and self-determination (Autonomy) with an effort to find meaning in life (purpose in life). Last of all, individuals make an effort to use their talents and abilities to the maximum level they can, and all these together point towards the true essence of psychological well-being. The subdomains of PWB converge to explore the degree to which people combine these characteristics and their relationship with factors like age, gender, socioeconomic class, race and education.

In addition to the domains , research also suggests other variables and their relationship with PWB as a construct ranging from physical health (Cho, Martin, Margrett, Macdonald, Poon, 2011), life satisfaction and life orientation (Rathore, Kumar, Gautam, 2015), financial capability (Taylor, Jenkins, Sacker, 2011), marriage (Kim,Mckenry, 2002; (Soulsby, Bennett,

2015), religious involvement (, 2008), love (Singh, Dhingra, 2014) self-esteem (Sarkova et al., 2014) and perceived social support (Emadpoor, Lavasani, Shahcheraghi, 2015).

With the passage of time wellbeing as a construct has been associated with numerous phenomenon. Amongst such is the involvement of emotions towards the contribution on our overall well-being.

Emotion as defined by Hockenbury & Hockenbury, (2007) is a psychological state that involves three distinctive components: physiological response, expressive response and subjective experience. This definition incorporates and highlights several domains, vital to the understanding of emotions. It states that emotions bring a physiological change in our bodies such as increase in blood pressure, heart rate or sweats. The physiological changes are not observable by others unless we express them verbally or non-verbally .It further states that we express our emotions in a behavioral manner, through voluntary or involuntary reactions indicating our emotions. For example fainting, being angry with someone, fidgeting during an interview, shallow breathing. The trickiest component however is the subjective one, it dictates how each individual experiences emotions and describes it, making it an individualized component of description and interpretation of feelings which is different for every person. This trickiest yet the most fascinating part involves verbal expression, as a prerequisite to communicate what someone is feeling. Insights towards verbal expression/communication of emotions have been reported from various sub disciplines of psychology including social psychology, cognitive psychology, and clinical psychology (Athanasiadou & Tabakowska, 1998; Mildner, 2008; Davies, Swan, Schmidt, Tchanturia, 2011; (Gumz, Lucklum, Herrmann, Geyer, Brähler, 2011).

The expression of emotions is especially relevant as it would explain the relationship between verbal expression of emotions through swearing and its effect on our psychological well-being. As studies indicates that both positive and negative emotions play a role in increasing and decreasing our well-being. Research conducted by Fredrickson, 1998; Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005 reflect that experiencing negative emotions more than positive ones, and decrease our overall well-being, whereas studies do stress that individuals inclined to avoid negative emotions are at risk of low adaptive functions and decreased wellbeing. As a result of which a decline in life satisfaction, low grades, worsen physical health and low social support were reported (Tamir & Ford, 2012).

Also, research shows that utilizing suppression to regulate emotions lead to decreased wellbeing, reduced positive emotions and exacerbated emotional experiences (Gross and John, 2003; Roemer et al , 2009). Whereas cognitive reappraisal has been proved as positively affecting psychological well-being, increased positive mood and reduced negative affect (Gross and John, 2003).

Contrary to suppression another approach is Catharsis, which is also the cornerstone of this study, has been utilized historically for emotional regulation and expression. Result reflecting the effectivity of catharsis has been however of controversial and mixed nature (Pascual-Leone and Greenberg; 2007; Bushman, 2002; Watson and Bedard, 2006; Jemmer (2006)). To build a comprehensive understanding of this approach, let us go back to the historical origins of this approach.

1.2 Catharsis

It is a natural human necessity to experience and express emotions (Scheff, 2001). Emotion as defined by American psychological association stands as “a complex pattern of changes, including physiological arousal, feelings, cognitive processes, and behavioural reactions, made in response to a situation perceived to be personally significant”. Concerned with the significance of emotions in human behaviour, maintenance of emotions is also a vital factor to view upon. An approach to deal and maintain emotions is of catharsis, a theory which states an emotional reservoir fills up when emotions are not let out, with the reservoir filled up there are chances of a spill over, so to avoid such possibilities its suggested to let out emotions regularly to maintain emotions, avoiding a more extreme response than what a situation demands (Cacioppo, Freberg, 2013).

Catharsis has a great history and stretches back to Greeks. Aristotle believed that catharsis moderates emotions and restores harmony in a person .According to him, it provides relief from disturbances (Bushman, Baumeister, Stack, 1999).

Later Catharsis was studied and defined by Freud and Breuer as a body process which is involuntary and instinctive (Breuer & Freud, 1974).Similarly Schultz and Schultz (2004) defined catharsis as "the process of reducing or eliminating a complex by recalling it to conscious awareness and allowing it to be expressed". Catharsis aids in the feelings of being less emotionally reactive, light mood and less overwhelmed.

Also a model which connects Psychological well-being and catharsis, playing important role as a basis of this study is Freud's Hydraulic model of emotions. It basically put forwards the idea that emotional distress is like fluid flowing through our body and it is extremely necessary to express it rather than keeping it in our system. Therefore not expressing these emotions might create pressure in the system, resulting negative psychological experience. The greater the expression of negative emotions, the greater the relief should be (American Psychological Association, 2007).

Emotional expression in online setting and media is researched as well. When one gets no other way and is worried about their image they choose online format more for catharsis. People use venting sites where they read and write whatever they go through without getting their image distorted. These venting sites are known as rant sites. Users of these sites have more anger traits in them and they had more of physical/verbal fights, problems in relationships and damaging property (Martin, Coyier, VanSistine, & Schroeder, 2013). However, Bushman in 2002 found out that venting actually increases the aggression then helping us to decrease it. So venting as an anger management coping strategy fails to reduce anger, as all actions like using these sites or hitting pillows eventually leads us towards being more aggressive towards that person who offended us. On the other hand remaining silent and doing nothing helps reducing anger (Bushman, 2002).

However, contrary to Bushman's view, Psychoanalytic view of cathartic aggression towards others or towards self is because of the death instinct, a psychic energy that creates a tension. So, if aggression is taken out it reduces the motivation of aggression. It is also implicit in "primal therapy" (Janov, 1970) and suggests that the more aggressive urges are expressed the more are the chances of low aggressive tensions and hostilities. It can be said that relieving aggression provides a cathartic effect. (Berkowitz, 1977).

1.3 Swearing

To express strong emotions such as frustration and aggression, swearing is used because it gives us relief and acts as a form of catharsis (Patrick, 1901). Swearing, also known as cursing, can be best described as a form of linguistic activity utilizing taboo words to convey the expression of strong emotions (Vingerhoets, Bylsma, Vlam, 2013). The Association of Psychological Science's *Perspectives on Psychological Science* answered queries related to swearing and cleared that where physical violence can be avoided by swearing, at the same time

it can also be used in a cathartic way (Jay, 2009). Vingerhoets et al, 2013, suggested in their article that swearing may provide a stress of relief and can function as a behaviour for physical aggression. Swearing as a mode of communication fulfils a wide range of functions, perhaps because of its taboo nature and its ability to express strong emotions. Swearing manifests group membership, attitudes and foreshadows topics likely to have transgressive reference. The use of swearing is associated with humorous, productions and speech variables like volume, pitch and tempo. Along with that, swearing has been suggested as a strong medium to verbalize frustration. Contrary to the negative evaluation of swearing, swearing serves as means to form and modulate social identities and relationships (Baruch and Jenkins, 2006; Stapleton, 2003).

Claudia Deidda in her article mentioned that the form and function of bad words came from our ancestors' first words, according to some studies, when they reacted to threatening or hurtful situations or when facing situation of shock or astonishment, shouts were uttered expressing fear and pain. Another record reveals that swearing can be from golden days of Egyptians as Jews have been prohibited to practice swearing from a long time (Deidda, 2013).

Describing the categories of Swearing, Steven Pinker, in his book, *The stuff of thought* added that there are five ways in which a person can swear “descriptively, idiomatically, abusively, emphatically and cathartically” (Pinker, 2007). According to Pinker, Cathartic swearing is used by people when something bad happens and to tell that they are undergoing a negative emotion. These functions don't require swearing though. Different cultures and countries have different view on swearing like in Bikol a different set of vocabulary is specified to use when angry.

In England and in United States swearing is seemed as rude. Profane language and swearing is liberally used in global varieties of English (Deidda, 2013). Also different regions take different words as abusive or offensive. Like in Fijian, Arabic, and Albanian, mentioning faeces is taken offensive where as in languages of British, French and German, shit, *merde*, and *Scheiße* are considered as bad and taboo words. The term for *female genitalia* and *saatana* (Satan) are considered as one of the rudest words in Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and language of Finland. With all these words being taken as offensive only Japanese culture discourages the practice of words equivalent of 'idiot' which represents mental deficiency (Harbeck, 2015).

In an article, the science of swearing (Jay, 2012), a result of 10,000 episodes, by children and adults, of public swearing was discussed. As per that research there are no negative

consequences in use of swear words, such as leading to physical violence. Also mostly swearing is done to elicit humour, storytelling, fitting in the crowd, stress management, self-deprecation, or as a substitute for physical aggression. There is no recorded data for patterns of swearing privately available. Though in casual setting, in order to complete casual dialogues, mild level of swearing is used whereas moderate level of swearing is used to complete abusive dialogues (Kapoor, 2016).

Swearing was not acceptable in social conversation in past but now it is seen as rapport building content in certain contexts. Words like “god’s sake!, hell no!, and damn it” were earlier found as offensive but now they have been losing their offensive nature and are taken casually within in certain settings. Findings of research on Australian trade workers show that swearing was used as a function of breaking the ice and maintaining the bond as well as to differentiate themselves from other society members. It was considered as a tool for maintaining affiliations between members of unique cultures (McLeod, 2011). Johnson, Lewis, 2010 stated that “research has shown that swearers are perceived as socially inept, incompetent and untrustworthy.”

According to researches the dominant language of a multilingual or bilingual speaker is used for swearing (Chiaro and Nocella 1999 and Dewaele 2004).

Swearing, like joking, may be considered strictly the realm of native speakers and only tolerated in non-native speakers when fully accepted by the wider speech community. Researches also suggest that like joking, swearing is also only tolerated by native speakers. Moreover, in case of communication with native speakers it is only taken lightly when it is accepted by wider speech community (Chiaro, 2009; Johnson, Lewis, 2010).

Our society gives the intensity to the value of taboo words i.e. words associated to death, religious matters, sexual organs and supernatural powers. On the other hand words that are taboo but still considered polite are completely dependent on the context and approval of the gathering (Febrianuswantoro, 2012).

But why one uses swear words to express emotions—to do catharsis- why isn’t rich vocabulary used for expressing emotions in intense communication? Probably because of lack of education and low social status. As per research, London roughs have clear association of low status and lack of education with usage of swearing or bad words and that is why they say ‘bloody’ more than to use rich vocabulary to express themselves (Mohr, 2013).

Swearing on internet has two extremes i.e. impolite and polite. Impolite swearing, which is intentional, includes verbal abuse, aggression and social power whereas polite swearing serves as a function of social bonding helping in being a group member and also as adding humour, kind or furious, anonymously among internet users. (Dyner, 2012)

Bushman discussed a study whose result suggest that media messages can alter beliefs of people about anger management. That study preferred hitting a punching bag for catharsis and people went for it in the experiment. It showed that people who followed the media message of hitting punching bag had increased aggression compared to those who read article of relaxation. Concluding that media supports catharsis but research literature is still far from supporting it firmly (Bushman, Baumeister, Stack, 1999).

Study of Bushman also gives us evidence that the Hydraulic model of Freud which is also known as cathartic model is mistaken. The current Cognitive Neo-association model suggests that actions that are fierce and hostile are associated with angry thoughts (Bushman, 2002). So, if one says more foul things or engages in hitting behaviour it basically maintains these thoughts by keeping these emotions in one's memory and eventually it increases the anger. Thus, people should engage in productive substitute like expressive writing to reduce the effect of an offensive event (Graham, et al., 2008).

Here the question arises that when this use of obscene language is adopted by a person? "The Science of Swearing" article gives evidence to this question by discussing the data of usage of swearing. According to this data a child starts to swear at the age of 2 and have at least 30-40 vocabulary of offensive words when they start their schooling. But those are often milder offensive words and there is no research done to find out if children know meaning of those words or not. But through an interview data, it is evident that parents, siblings and peers are the major source of learning these words rather than from mass media. Research of Jay indicates that 0.3% - 0.7% in over overall speech we swear on average. This percentage is though very significant. It requires a period of time to understand the contextual implication of swearing (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). This data also suggest that people who swear are more of people with Type-A personality having trait of extraversion highest in them and less of conscientiousness, agreeableness, sexual anxiety and religiosity (Jay & Janschewitz, 2012).

Now when this gives somewhat an idea of when and from where swearing started, it should also be understood that what exactly happens when one swears. It was researched by

Bower JS and Pleydell-Pearce CW, 2011, that autonomic responses to swear words were larger than to euphemisms and neutral stimuli, (Bower & Pearson ,2011) , giving evidence that different forms of words do evoke emotional responses and are closely associated with emotional system, neuro-psychologically (Lancker DV, 1999) and cognitively (Zajonc ,1984).

How so ever, in 2011, Stephen et al. assessed pain tolerance of people frequently swearing in daily life and results suggested that though cursing gives you relief from pain but if it is overused in daily life then it is likely that effects of swearing in pain tolerance lessens. Therefore American pain society suggests that swearing could be a short term intervention to reduce pain but if overused then it might not give the same results (Stephens R, 2015).

Pinker (2007) explained the neuro biology of swearing that the cathartic swearing is like a “rage-circuit” connecting amygdala to hypothalamus and then flowing to the gray matter of the mid brain and eventually producing the cathartic effect in response to pain or anger. Hence, in linguistic aspect cathartic swearing may be considered as response cries or ejaculations because it is an adaptation to reduce stress level and to deepen communication just like growls of an animal which not only reduces down the stress level but also prevents the animal to show further physical aggression towards the enemy (Vingerhoets, Bylsma, Vlam, 2013).

It is a point to ponder that why swearing elicits physiological arousal, perhaps because of some past association. In a study results suggested that skin conductance with respect to arousal was significantly low if neutral words were used or read as in comparisons to reading of swear words which showed significantly higher skin conductance (Dinn & Harris, 2000; Gray, Hughes, & Schneider, 1982), (Harris, Aycicegi and Gleason, 2003). It was also found that this physiological arousal on swearing could also be because of the association of punishment in past, so the negative consequences of punishment are highly there. In short, the more a person was frequently punished for swearing the higher arousal in him (Harris, 2003).

So far this was the physiological impact studied on effects of swearing but to study psychological effects of swearing are equally important and a domain to explore. Reviewing Jay’s book “Why we curse: A Neuro-Psycho-Social theory of Speech”, *Zsuzsanna Ardó* describes that according to Neuro-Psycho-Social (NPS) Theory, cursing has always meaning and attentive behaviour behind it. NPS theory suggests that "automatic" cursing is a process that occurs without filtering and passing through conscious awareness where as "controlled" cursing is actively processed by working memory and is a part of consciousness. Both cognitive

processes monitor and control speech (Shiffrin & Schneider, 1977). Swearing is very much Controlled process as it is automatic. When one jokes or insults someone they are likely to use controlled process of swearing than automatic. However when people experiencing harsh pain at that point automatic swearing is processed. Research studies of Neuropsychology shows that there are different levels of cursing and it is not restricted to automatic processing. The Neuro-Psycho-Social Theory (NPS) advanced in the book aims at "restoring emotion to language and dismantle emotionless (curse-less) language theories that have been promulgated for over a century".

Therefore in controlled swearing example of taking an oath can be taken and it is evident that verbal reasoning and functions of semantic and syntactic are used while taking oath, again which is a controlled process, so it is processed in the left hemisphere of brain while the automatic process of swearing, like swearing when you meet an accident, is processed in the right hemisphere. So even if the left hemisphere of brain damages then though these people cannot create creative sentences but when they will be to swear automatically for a strong emotion because of the emotion getting triggered from right hemisphere. It has also been studied that people who cannot speak because of aphasia or Tourette syndrome, which are neurological disorders, can swear articulately to express emotions.

We evaluate our lives cognitively or in the form of affect which is our subjective Psychological well-being. Well-being is multi-dimensional such as attitude towards self and towards others, direction towards life, managing the environment, determination and development of self. All these aspects if explored with swearing will let us know the linguistic effect of swearing and its impact but also that if doing so provides a cathartic effect and keeps our psychological well-being intact.

Moreover, swearing still is viewed as linguistic feature in human culture with negative connotation. May it be media, literature or culture? The consequences of swearing are still in debate. The perspective of women towards swearing on platforms like Television, cable, newspaper and in formal meetings is less supportive compared to men (Selnow, 1985).It also could be because males start to swear at younger age than females (Fine & Johnson, 1984, p.62). Though women do swear less and it views as inappropriate but swearing in women increases when in company of same gender (Gati, 2015).

In Pakistani culture, males swear more than females. But hypothesis of whether swearing was done more in positive situations (i.e. joking with friends, lighten up) or in negative situations (i.e. anger) it revealed that swearing was done more in negative situations than in positive situations. However, in young age there was no significant difference in usage of swearing between genders but it was revealed that young males swear in both negative and positive situations (Maqsood, 2007). According to the research *Profanity and Gender* by Michael Gauthier, traditional stereotypes tend to represent women as people one must avoid swearing with by politeness and men as people who swear a lot (Gauthier, 2015).

As suggested above, we make choices about which word to use depending upon the company we are in, and what our relationship is to that company, as well as the social setting. Since culturally males in Pakistan are more social than females, it is assumed that males will be using more swear words to express their emotions than females. And to explore the area of psychological well-being of males as well as females is aim of this study.

Therefore it is hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship between psychological wellbeing and swearing.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

Participants comprised of university students with ages ranging from 18-25. The students were enrolled in undergraduate and graduate level programs, belonging from different universities in Karachi. The sample comprised of a total number of 105 participants.

2.2 Measures

2.2.1 Informed Consent Form

Permission of students to take part in the survey research was obtained through an informed consent. The consensual agreement stated the purpose of the survey research, the rights of participants entailing the confidentiality of information provided, information regarding any foreseeable discomfort, harm or risks along with the entitled right of participants to withdraw from the research at any given time without penalty.

2.2.2 Demographic Information Form

A demographic information form was developed to assure participation of only those individuals who were befitting the research criteria of the study. Information regarding age,

gender, institutional affiliation, degree program, marital status, birth order, number of siblings was collected through the form.

2.2.3 Ryff's Psychological Well Being Scale

The Ryff inventory is comprised of 42 items (medium form), consisting items representing six domains of Psychological Well-being: Self-acceptance, Positive Relations with others, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life and Personal Growth. The inventory ratings are based on a Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1-6 (1 stating strong agreement while 6 as strong disagreements).

Following are the subscales in Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale and method Followed for scoring:

Recode negative phrased items: # 3, 5, 10, 13,14,15,16,17,18,19, 23, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 39 and 41. (i.e., if the scored is 6 in one of these items, the adjusted score is 1; if 5, the adjusted score is 2 and so on...)

Add together the final degree of agreement in the 6 dimensions:

- a. Autonomy: items 1, 7,13,19,25, 31, 37
- b. Environmental mastery: items 2, 8, 14, 20,26,32,38
- c. Personal Growth: items 3, 9, 15, 21,27,33,39
- d. Positive Relations: items: 4,10,16,22,28,34,40
- e. Purpose in life: items: 5,11,17,23,29,35,41
- f. Self-acceptance: items 6,12,18,24,30,36,42

2.2.4 Normative Swearing Scale (NSC)

The NSC inventory is comprised of 16 items, determining the personal norms of respondents with regards to swearing and measuring respondent's permissiveness Towards swearing. The scale also additionally required participants to indicate the number of times they swear per week. This Likert-type scale rates responses with ranges from 17, (where 1 indicated strong disagreement and 7 indicated strong agreement). Internal consistency for the scale was 84.

3. Procedures

Permission was acquired from university administration to collect data from the universities. The nature of sampling employed was convenience sampling. Participants were approached individually for participation in the research. For affirming their agreement, an

informed consent with regards to the study was provided to ensure the participants willingness and the confidentiality of the study. A demographic information form was given to the participant to ensure their eligibility in the research criteria. It took an average of ten minutes to complete the questionnaires. After completion, participants were debriefed regarding the study and thanked for their participation.

Data was entered in the Statistical Package for Social Analysts (SPSS) software and results were acquired by using correlation, determining the relationship between the variables.

4. Operational Definitions

4.1 Psychological Well-being

Psychological wellbeing is a construct that underlies human capacity to engage and function effectively in existing challenges of life.

4.2 Swearing

A mode of communication that employs taboo words to express strong positive or negative emotions.

5. Results

Table 5: Demographic Details

Demographic Details			
Variables		f	%
Gender	Male	46	43.80%
	Female	59	56.20%
Age	18-20	53	50.50%
	21-25	52	49.60%
No. of Siblings	01-03	43	41.00%
	04-08	62	59.10%
Birth Order	First born	31	29.50%
	Second born	37	35.20%
	Third born	27	25.70%
	Other	10	9.50%
Marital Status	Single	101	96.20%
	Married	4	3.80%
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	75	71.50%
	Joint Family	30	28.60%
Total No. of Family	02-Apr	18	17.10%
Members	05-Aug	76	72.40%
	More than 9	11	10.50%
Head of Family	Father	91	86.70%
	Mother	7	6.70%
	Other	7	6.70%
University	Bahria University	35	34.30%
	Iqra University	70	65.70%
University Program	BS-Psy	12	11.40%
	Management Sciences	59	56.20%
	BSCS	17	16.20%
	Other	17	16.20%
Semester	1st-4th	77	73.40%
	5th-8th	28	26.60%
Consulted Psychologist/Psychiatrist	Yes	12	11.40%
	No	93	88.60%
Reason For consulting	Personal Growth	3	2.90%
	Stress and anxiety issues	3	2.90%
	Other	6	5.70%
	Not applicable	93	88.60%

The above table shows that out of 105 participants 59 (56.2%) were female and 46(43.8%) were male, 53 (50.5%) were 18-20 years old and the remaining 52 (49.6%) belonged to the age range between 21-25 years old. Further 101 (96.2%) participants were single and only

4 (3.8%) participants were married. Total 70 (65.7%) participants were from Iqra University and 35 (34.3%) were from Bahria University. 77 (73.4%) participants belonged to the 1st-4th Semester and 28 (26.6%) belonged to 5th-8th semester. From 105 only 12 (11.4%) participants were consulted a psychologist/psychiatrist and the reasons for 3(2.9%) participants were personal growth, for other 3 (2.9%) were stress and anxiety issues while the remaining 6 (5.7%) participants belonged to other category.

Table 2: Psychometric Information of Scales

Psychometric Information of Scales						
Variable	No.of items	M	SD	Range	α	Skewness
Psychological wellbeing	38	161.8	19.982	86	0.757	0.642
Swearing	14	53.158	12.34	64	0.759	-0.49

Descriptive analysis shows that Psychological Wellbeing has 38 numbers of items with a mean score of 161.80 and standard deviation 19.982. The scale has range of 1-86 with Cronbach alpha (α) of 0.757 and the data seems to be positively skewed. Similarly the scale of swearing has 14 numbers of items with a mean score of 53.158 and standard deviation 12.340. This scale has range of 1-64 with Cronbach alpha (α) of 0.759 and the data seems to be negatively skewed.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation between Psychological Wellbeing and Swearing

Pearson Correlation between Psychological Wellbeing and Swearing (N=105)			
Variables	Swearing	Purpose in life	Psychological Wellbeing
Swearing	1	-0.296	-0.139
Purpose in life		1	0.682
Psychological Wellbeing			1

The table above shows relationship between Swearing, Purpose in life and Psychological wellbeing indicating significant negative correlation between swearing and purpose in life. However, no significant correlation was found between swearing and psychological wellbeing.

Mean Standard deviation and Independent Sample T-test between Gender and Psychological Wellbeing

Variable		N	M	SD	t	95%	
						CI	
						LL	UL
Gender	Male	42	163.5	21.3	0.758	-5.05902	11.30295
	Female	54	160.4	18.9			
df=2							

Table 4: Mean Standard deviation and Independent Sample T-test between Gender and Psychological Wellbeing

The above table shows the comparison between male and female on Psychological Wellbeing. The result shows non- significant group difference on psychological wellbeing between males and females participants.

Table 5: Mean Standard deviation and Independent Sample T-test between Gender and Swearing

Mean Standard deviation and Independent Sample t-test between Gender and Swearing							
Variable		N	M	SD	t	95%	
						CI	
						LL	UL
Gender	Male	46	57.3553	12.19	3.212**	2.857	12.08
	Female	59	49.886	11.52			

df= 2

The above table shows the comparison between male and female on swearing. The result shows a significant group difference on swearing between males and females participants.

6. Discussion

The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between psychological wellbeing and swearing. For that purpose, a hypothesis was devised to determine the relationship between these two variables. The hypothesis in discussion was that a significant relationship lies between psychological wellbeing and swearing. Psychological wellbeing, as stated before, is a construct

that underlies human capacity to engage and function effectively in existing challenges of life, whereas swearing suggests a mode of communication that employs taboo words to express strong positive or negative emotions. Researchers conducted to analyze this relationship have been to say, scant at best. With an aim, to explore verbal expression of emotions through cathartic swearing and its effects on psychological wellbeing this study was done on young adults.

The results obtained indicate that there is no significant correlation between psychological wellbeing and swearing; the correlation value being ($r = -.139$). Suggesting the idea that the use of swearing as means of catharsis has no significant impact on psychological wellbeing. Studies corroborating the results suggest that decreased life satisfaction and elevated levels of stress have no association with the swearing (Rassin & Muris, 2005). This study also proved that the hydraulic model of Freud, which suggests that if catharsis done to express emotions, there are less chances of being unfit psychologically. We can say that Bushman, 2002, rightly explained hydraulic model as mistaken. However it is yet to be explored whether catharsis can exacerbate emotional intensity as pointed out. (Bushman, Baumeister, Stack 1999). The correlation obtained from the results, signify a weak yet an existing relationship however, due to the limitation of available researches conducted in this region and apparent scarcity of researches done on this topic one cannot truly determine the nature of the relationship, thus cannot be concluded.

Table 3 shows a significant negative correlation between swearing and purpose in life. Purpose in life, in the most definitive terms, puts an emphasis on maturity and indicating a sense of direction and intention in life. An effective functioning individual is one, who has positive goals, sense of direction and intention contributing to the life's meaningfulness (Ryff, 1989). A negative correlation between these constructs indicate that those who swear more tend to have decreased sense of purpose in life. An intermediary factor, perceived lack of control, can describe the decreased sense of purpose in life, pointing to the regional or cultural factors face by the young adults. In comparison to western culture, individuals of this particular age bracket in eastern culture show a dependency of decisions (academic, financial, personal) on their parents indicating lack of control. Therefore it can be said that a decrease sense of purpose in life originates from this factor.

Results communicate that autonomy and swearing has no significant relationship, suggesting that level of independence of an individual in our culture does not implicate the use of swearing as mode of catharsis or emotional expression.

No significant correlation was found between positive relationships with others and swearing. This could be because of the cultural factor which makes individuals in our society conscious of their image. Therefore, unlike researches of Dynel (2012) and Mcleod (2011) individuals of Pakistani culture do not form interpersonal bonds on the basis of swearing.

A non-significant correlation emerged between swearing and self-acceptance, communicating no such relationship exists between the levels of self-acceptance and use of swearing. Contradicting evidence suggests that lack of self-acceptance tends to increase the use of swearing (Brill, 2000). Evidence suggests that people who tend to be defensive and hide their feelings employ swearing as a mechanism. Findings indicate that in our culture, satisfaction about one's personality and life has no relationship with use of swearing.

Lastly, results reflect that personal growth and environmental mastery do not influence the usage of swearing. Signifying that no such relationship exists between level of personal growth, environmental mastery and the use of swearing. These results suggest that in our culture an individual's level of competence and mastery in complex situations does not encourage swearing as a mode of communication. Along with that, an individual's level of personal development and improvement over time does not prompt the use of swearing in communication.

A further analysis of results show that males swear more than females. As mentioned in the literature, research support that males swear more than females and it may be because of the fact that they start swearing in young age (Selnow, 1985). That is why females do not support swearing on public platform unlike males. But strong evidence suggest that females are likely to use swear words in personal or gatherings with same gender (Gati, 2015). Hence, we could say that females are more image conscious in terms of language than males. A research (Masood, 2007) conducted in Pakistan corroborate the findings that males use swearing more than females, in negative and positive situations. Whereas with regards to the psychological wellbeing, results show that no significant difference is present in males and females. This finding is supported by a research conducted in Gilgit Baltistan, which stated to find no significant gender differences in psychological well-being, signifying equal levels of psychological wellbeing in males and females (Najam, Hussain, 2015).

Based on the findings, it is established that this avenue requires further exploration in order to determine the relationship between psychological wellbeing and swearing.

7. Conclusion

Swearing as a mode of communication has been prevailing among the young adults. The results suggested that Psychological well-being and Swearing has no significant correlation but it reflected the gender difference in swearing. New findings of this study showed negative correlation between swearing and purpose in life. These findings can be useful for further research purposes in linguistics.

8. Limitations and Recommendations

Keeping in sight the population targeted, the current study is limited due to the sample size including 105 participants. Hence, it is recommended that for future researches a larger population should be considered which can help in providing a better picture of whether there is a significant correlation between psychological wellbeing and swearing or not.

Another imperative factor that should be considered is that the sample should not just range in size, but also the sample should be range in terms of different age groups, different universities and there should be diversity in sample size as we only target two universities due to time constraints. Different age range will provide a better idea about the swearing trends and the psychological well-being of the individual as there is less researches related to swearing in Pakistan so it is also recommended that more researches should conduct on swearing to further explore this topic.

For future this research can further explore on the basis of religion and spirituality as it plays very important role in our culture, so that better and more advanced results yielded from the study.

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