

Happiness and Self-Esteem Among Undergraduate College Teachers of Assam: A Correlational Study

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Abstract

Self-esteem is regarded as the main component of a person's mental health. The main objective of this study was to study the relationship between happiness and self-esteem of undergraduate college teachers of Assam with special reference to Nagaon and Golaghat Districts of Assam. The sample size of the study is 364 undergraduate college teachers. The disproportionate stratified random sampling technique was adopted while selecting the sample. The researcher has used a self-developed college teachers' happiness scale and a self-esteem scale to assess the happiness and self-esteem of the teachers. Using SPSS version 26, the data were analysed using a variety of statistical methods, including percentages, means, standard deviations, t-tests, ANOVA, and Pearson correlation tests. The findings indicated that undergraduate college teachers have an average level of happiness and self-esteem. No significant differences were found in the happiness level of male and female undergraduate college teachers. However, significant differences were found in the self-esteem level of male and female undergraduate college teachers. Findings also revealed a strong positive correlation between happiness and self-esteem of undergraduate college teachers.

Keywords: *Happiness, Self-esteem, College teachers, Assam.*

Introduction

The concept of happiness is subjective. It is defined differently by each individual. Some people find happiness in external factors and others find it in internal factors. The external factors include materialistic things like marriage, social life, job satisfaction, leisure activities, etc. Internal components include self-actualization, goals, personality traits, and coping strategies. Etymologically, the word "happiness" comes from the Greek word eudaimonia, which consists of two words: eu, which means "good" or "well", and daimon, which means spirit or inner guidance force. In classical philosophy, eudaimonia was defined as a state of human happiness attained through moral behavior rather than pleasure alone (Das et al., 2026). A variety of emotions that excite us, make us laugh, and make us smile might be categorized as happiness. It is a state of contentment with life, experiencing intense pleasure and finding great satisfaction in many aspects of it (Kalita, P., 2025). Myers & Diener (1995) defined

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happiness as the experience of frequent positive effect, infrequent negative effect and an overall sense of satisfaction with life as a whole (As cited by Kour, 2022).

Martin Seligman, the father of positive psychology, has developed the five pillars of happiness, or the PERMA model. This model of happiness says that enhancing these five elements would lead to an increase in overall happiness and resilience. PERMA Model includes:

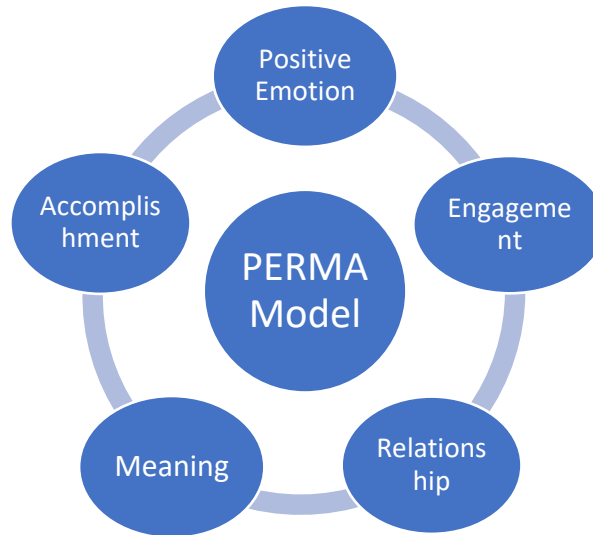


Figure: PERMA MODEL

Self esteem

Self-esteem is a person's perception of their own value or worth, or the degree to which they value, approve of, enjoy, prize, or like themselves. Another definition of self-esteem is a person's subjective assessment of their own worth, which is a reflection of their confidence in their own abilities (Mahire & Ahir, 2025). This assessment can be both positive and negative. A person who has a high sense of self-esteem is aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Rosenberg (1979) stated, "Self- Esteem signifies a positive or negative orientation toward an object" (as cited in Kumara, S. K., and Praveena, K. B. 2019).

According to the Cambridge dictionary, self-esteem is the belief and confidence in one's own abilities and worth. In 1890, the concept of self-esteem was introduced by William James (Tabassum, F. and Ali, M. A., 2012, as cited in Das, 2023). After James, various attempts are made to explore its depth. The most popular effort among several experts is Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, which consists of self-esteem. Maslow ranks self-esteem second to last and views it as the fundamental human need that gives rise to the concept of self-actualization (Tabassum & Ali, 2012).

Happiness and self-esteem are important dimensions of positive psychology, which contributes psychological well-being of an individual. In the profession of teaching, both are crucial as they affect the overall learning outcome of an educational institution. Undergraduate college teachers, who are responsible for building the foundations of higher education, their happiness and self-esteem are essential for the success of the teaching and learning process.

Statement of the Problem

The research study is entitled “Happiness and Self-Esteem Among Undergraduate College Teachers: A Correlational Study”.

Significance of the study

Happiness makes work easier and more enjoyable and it is associated with better physical health, increased productivity, and stronger interpersonal relationships (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005, as cited in Singh and Mahato, 2025). On the other hand, unhappiness makes the teaching work harder, more tedious and unpleasant. Thus, the happiness of the college teachers is necessary for teaching success and overall advancement of education (Das et al., 2026). According to research, those who have higher self-esteem typically have happier lives and more positive emotional states. Teachers who have a high level of self-esteem are more confident, relaxed in the classroom and have a positive attitude towards their profession and students (Kumara, S. K., and Praveena, K. B. 2019). It is often stated that teaching entails significant intellectual, emotional, and social obligations. College teachers have a significant impact on students’ academic performance, personal growth, and future employment. However, teachers’ mental health can be impacted by growing workloads, administrative duties, performance standards, technological advancements, and the need to strike a balance between work and personal obligations. As a result, it has become more crucial to understand the factors that affect teachers’ happiness and self-esteem.

Operational definition

Happiness: Happiness in this study indicates the satisfaction of a person as a teacher. It investigates college teachers’ satisfaction levels.

Self-esteem: Self-esteem implies a person’s overall opinion of his or her worth. involves ranking one’s own behaviour and attributes as positive or negative. In this study, self-esteem of college teachers indicates overall success in their profession.

Undergraduate college teacher: In the present study, Undergraduate college teacher means the teacher who teaches the students of government and provincialized degree colleges of Golaghat and Nagaon districts of Assam.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the happiness and self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat Districts of Assam.
2. To compare the happiness level of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam with reference to Gender (Female and Male).
3. To compare the self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam with reference to Gender (Female and Male).
4. To examine the relationship between happiness and self-esteem of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant difference in the happiness level of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam with respect to gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam with respect to gender (Female and Male).
3. There is no significant relationship between happiness and self-esteem of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam.

Delimitation of the study

The study is confined to only regular teachers of the government and provincialized college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam.

Review of related literature

Benevene et. al. (2018) assessed “Self-esteem and happiness as predictors of school teachers’ health: The mediating role of job satisfaction, in Rome, Italy”. From their study, it was found that Job satisfaction fully mediates between happiness, self-esteem, and health in teachers. Moreover, the study revealed that Work is a relevant domain to promote teachers’ happiness and self-esteem and their health through job satisfaction. Kumara, S. K., and Praveena, K. B. (2019) revealed a significant difference regarding gender, location, type of management, and secondary school teachers with reference to their self-esteem. This study also showed a slight and negligible positive correlation between happiness and self-esteem with reference to secondary school teachers. Banerjee and Das (2021) revealed a significant difference in the level of self-esteem and happiness between the government and private university teachers. Jauhri (2022) explored the relationship between happiness and self-esteem among young adults and found a strong relationship between young people’s self-esteem and happiness. Mahire & Ahir (2025) showed that female senior college teachers are happier than male senior college teachers. Female senior college teachers possess more self - esteem than male senior college teachers. The results also revealed a significant correlation between self-esteem and happiness.

Methodology of the Study

Method: A descriptive survey method was used in the present study.

Population and Sample: The population of the study consisted of all undergraduate (regular only) college teachers in the Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam. A total 364 undergraduate college teachers from arts, commerce and science were selected through disproportionate stratified random sampling technique.

Tools Used: For the collection of the data, the researcher has developed and standardised the College Teachers Happiness Scale and the Self-Esteem Scale for teachers and used them in the study.

A brief description of the tools is given

a) College Teachers' Happiness Scale

The College Teachers Happiness Scale includes 31 statements, out of which 18 items were positive and 17 items were negative. The dimensions of the scale are Positive Emotion, Positive Relationship, Career Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction, Psychological Well-being, and Spiritual Well-being. The test-retest method was employed by the researcher to establish the reliability of the scale. The coefficient of reliability of the scale was 0.948. The researcher has checked the content validity with the help of experts opinions.

b) The Self-Esteem Scale for teachers

The investigators also standardized this scale for the college teachers. The scale consisted of 17 negative items and 16 positive items covering 5 dimensions. The dimensions are Self-worth items, Competence items, Self-love items, Social items, and Humility items. The coefficient of reliability of the test is 0.969, which was tested by using the most popularly used method of reliability, the test-retest method. Subject experts confirmed the content validity of the tool.

Statistics used for the study

For the analysis of collected data, the investigator used different statistical techniques such as Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test, and ANOVA using SPSS software.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The investigator analysed the data in accordance with the set objectives.

Objective 1: To find out the happiness and self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat Districts of Assam.

Table 1

Level of Happiness among the Undergraduate College Teachers

Grade	Range of Z-Score	Level of Happiness	Number of Teachers	Percentage of Happiness of the Undergraduate College Teachers
+1 and above	146 to 167	High	63	17.31%
-1 to +1	113 to 145	Average	235	64.56%
-1 and below	112 and below	Low	66	18.13%
Total			364	100%

Source: Based on primary data obtained from the field study, 2025-26

Calculated in MS. Excel

Interpretation

Table 4.1 shows the overall level of Happiness among undergraduate college teachers. The study indicated that out of 364 undergraduate college teachers, 17% have a high level of happiness, 65% have an average level of happiness and 18% of undergraduate college teachers have a low level of happiness. Based on the result, it can be said that the majority of the undergraduate teachers fall within the average level of happiness.

Table 2

Level of Self-esteem among the Undergraduate College Teachers

Grade	Range of Z-Score	Level of Self-esteem	Number of Teachers	Percentage of Self-esteem of the Undergraduate College Teachers
+1 and above	124 to 141	High	52	14.29%
-1 to +1	102 to 123	Average	263	72.25%
-1 and below	101 and below	Low	49	13.46%
Total			364	100%

Source: Based on data obtained from a field survey 2025-26 and calculated in MS. Excel

Interpretation

Table 2 shows the overall level of Self-esteem among undergraduate college teachers. The study found that out of 364, 14% of undergraduate college teachers have a high level of self-esteem, 72% have an average level of self-esteem and 14% have a low level of self-esteem. Hence, it can be said that the level of self-esteem among undergraduate college teachers is not the same.

Objective 2: To compare the Happiness level of undergraduate College teachers of Assam with reference to Gender (Female and Male).

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the Happiness level of undergraduate college teachers with respect to Gender.

Table 3

Comparison of Happiness between Female and Male Undergraduate College Teachers

Variable	Locality	N	Mean	SD	Df	t value	p- value	Remarks
College Teachers Happiness	Female	174	131.51	15.63	362	1.89	0.058	Not significant
	Male	190	128.17	17.75				

Source: Based on primary data obtained from the field study, 2025-26

Calculated in SPSS 26 .0 version

Interpretation

The result shows that the obtained value of 't' is 1.89, which is lower than the tabulated value 1.97 at a significance level of 0.05. Similarly, the p-value (0.058) is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. So, the null hypothesis of the study is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the happiness of male and female undergraduate college teachers.

Objective 3: To compare the self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers of Assam with reference to Gender (Female and Male).

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers regarding Gender (Female and Male).

Table 4

Comparison of Self-esteem between Female and Male Undergraduate College Teachers

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t value	p-value	Remarks
Self-esteem level	Female	174	114.18	9.88	362	2.11	0.04	Significant
	Male	190	111.95	10.27				

Source: Based on primary data obtained from the field study, 2025-26

Calculated in SPSS 26 .0 version

Interpretation

The result revealed that the calculated t value is 2.11, which is greater than the table value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance and the obtained p-value (0.04) is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant difference in the self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers concerning gender.

Objective No 4: To find out the relationship between happiness and self-esteem of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between Happiness and Self-esteem of Undergraduate College teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam.

Table

Result of the correlation between happiness and self-esteem of Undergraduate College teachers

Correlation			
		Happiness	Self- Esteem
	Pearson Correlation	1	.765**

Happiness	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	364	364
Self- Esteem	Pearson Correlation	.765**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	364	364
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)			

Interpretation

From the result, it was found that the Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) between Happiness and Self-esteem is 0.765, with a significance value of 0.000($p < 0.01$). This indicates a strong positive and significant correlation between happiness and self-esteem among the undergraduate college teachers. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected at the 0.01 level of significance.

Major Findings of the study:

- The study found that 17% have a high level of happiness, 65% have an average level of happiness and 18% of undergraduate college teachers have a low level of happiness.
- The study found that 14% of undergraduate college teachers have a high level of self-esteem, 72% have an average level of self-esteem and 14% have a low level of self-esteem.
- There is no significant difference in the happiness of male and female undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam.
- There is a significant difference in the self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers concerning gender of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam.
- Results revealed a strong positive and significant correlation between happiness and self-esteem among the undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam.

Discussion

- The study revealed that undergraduate college teachers have an average level of happiness. The study is supported by several studies, such as Kumara and Praveena K.B. (2019), Acharya et al. (2026), who also reported that secondary school teachers possess a moderate level of happiness.
- The study found that undergraduate college teachers have an average level of self-esteem. This result is supported by George (2022), who revealed that most of the prospective teachers have an average level of self-esteem.
- There is no significant difference in the happiness of male and female undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam. The present finding was supported by the previous studies by Buragohain and Hazarika (2015), Kaur & Chopra

(2021), Das et al. (2026), which demonstrated that scores of the teachers' happiness did not differ significantly based on gender.

- There is a significant difference in the self-esteem level of undergraduate college teachers concerning gender of undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam. This finding is aligned with several studies, such as Tabassum, F (2012), Mahire and Ahir (2025), who found a significant difference between male and female college teachers in self-esteem.
- Results revealed a strong positive and significant correlation between happiness and self-esteem among the undergraduate college teachers of Nagaon and Golaghat districts of Assam. This finding is supported by Benevene, P., (2018), Jauhri (2022), Kalita (2025), Mahire and Ahir (2025), who investigated a positive correlation between people's happiness and their level of self-esteem

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study showed that gender did not play any significant role in the level of happiness of the undergraduate college teachers, whereas in the case of self-esteem, gender has a significant role. This study showed a strong, positive, and significant correlation between happiness and self-esteem among undergraduate college teachers. This finding indicates that happiness and self-esteem are closely associated with each other. It indicates that teachers with higher self-esteem have higher levels of happiness. As a result, both happiness and self-esteem are essential for the overall well-being of undergraduate college teachers.

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