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# The Effects of Family Support and Personal Income on Life Satisfaction : Literature

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** This study systematically reviewed and sorted out the relevant studies on the impact of personal income and family support on life satisfaction, aiming to explore the correlation among them, and propose some feasible measures to improve people's life satisfaction based on the research results and practical problems or specific fields.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The methods of literature review and qualitative research were used in this study.

**Findings:** The research review found that both personal income and family support have a positive impact on life satisfaction.

**Research limitations:** The literature review can only be analyzed based on existing research results, and cannot provide new data or findings. There may be bias in the selection of literature, and it is easy to overlook some studies that are not easy to obtain but are equally important.

**Practical implications:** The impact of family support and personal income on life satisfaction can help social workers and policymakers better identify and address well-being issues among residents, especially during difficult economic times. Research on this topic can also help to assess the impact of family support and personal income in different socioeconomic contexts.

**value:** Through sorting out the existing research, we can clearly show the research context and development trend in this field. On the basis of reviewing the existing research, the shortcomings and gaps of the current research are further identified to provide direction and inspiration for future research.

## Keywords

literature review; History; Definition; Family support; Personal Income; Life satisfaction.

## 1. Introduction

Life satisfaction refers to individual's subjective evaluation of their own life quality, involving individual's feelings on material life, spiritual life, social relations, working environment and so on. The level of life satisfaction directly affects individuals' mental health and happiness, and is also one of the important indicators to measure social harmony and stability (Papi & Cheraghi, 2021).

In today's society, life satisfaction, as an important index to measure individual subjective well-being, has been paid more and more attention by the academic community. With the rapid economic development and profound changes in social structure, people's living conditions have been significantly improved, but at the same time, they are also facing many challenges and pressures. In this context, exploring the factors that influence life satisfaction, especially the two core elements of personal income and family support, has important implications for understanding the complex mechanisms of individual well-being in modern society, formulating effective social policies, and enhancing public happiness. As an important indicator to measure economic conditions, personal income is directly related to an individual's material living standards and economic security (Feldstein, 2017). As an important part of an individual's life, family's support function also plays a non-negligible role in an individual's mental health and life satisfaction. In a rapidly changing social environment, family support has become an important reliance for individuals to cope with pressure and challenges (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2020). Therefore, studying the mechanism by which family support affects life satisfaction and its interaction with personal income is of great significance for understanding the role and value of families in modern society.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 History Research of Life Satisfaction

Many scholars have conducted research on life satisfaction, and some scholars have studied the impact on life satisfaction from the perspective of personality (Schimmack et al., 2004; Peterson et al., 2007). Schimmack et al.(2004) studied the impact of extraversion and neuroticism on life satisfaction, and Peterson et al.(2007) analyzed the relationship between personality strengths, happiness orientation (participation, happiness and meaning) and life satisfaction. A large number of scholars have studied life satisfaction from the perspective of income (Frijters et al., 2004; Cheung & Leung, 2008). Frijters et al. (2004) investigated changes in life satisfaction in the ten years following East German reunification. Cheung & Leung(2008) studied the complex effects of income gap and income inequality on life satisfaction. In the 2010s, there were many studies on life satisfaction.

Judging from the relationship between physical health and life satisfaction, the degree of physical and mental health significantly predicted life satisfaction (Gana et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2014). Based on Maslow's third and fourth level needs analysis, some scholars have studied the impact of social support and self-esteem on life satisfaction. Kong et al., (2015) analyzed the mediating role of social support and self-esteem among gratitude, emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. However, Haar et al.(2014) and Lavalekar(2016) studied the impact of work-life balance (WLB) on life satisfaction. Fergusson et al.(2015) studied the relationship between mental health problems and life satisfaction. With the development of science and technology, the application of intelligent technology in the study of life satisfaction will be more and more extensive. Prokopowicz et al., (2022) used artificial intelligence and big data analysis technology to mine and analyze massive data, so as to more accurately grasp the dynamic changes and influencing factors of life satisfaction.

### 2.2 Definition of Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is a person's overall assessment of the quality of their life according to the standards they set themselves. It covers many areas of life such as family, work, health and interpersonal relationships, and comprehensively reflects the degree of satisfaction of individual psychological needs (Bartram, 2021). Diener(1984) argues that life satisfaction is not only more stable and lasting than happiness, but also has a broader impact. It is a general view of life and how satisfied a person is with how things are going. According to Bakar (2022), life satisfaction refers to a judgment process in which individuals evaluate their lives based on their own unique set of characteristics or criteria. Veenhoven(1988) defined life satisfaction as people's subjective evaluation of their overall life quality. Lyubomirsky, King, and Diener(2009) argue that life satisfaction is a psychosocial construct that has repeatedly been shown to be an important cognitive component affecting a wide range of social and political behaviors. According to Kasprzak(2010), life satisfaction is related to emotional attitude and reflective attitude towards life, and is a subjective process accompanied by emotional perception and evaluation of the past. In short, life satisfaction includes one's own opinions and perspectives and is therefore a subjective assessment of one's own life. Life satisfaction is a person's overall cognitive evaluation of their living situation most of the time or over a certain

period of time, based on a self-selected standard. It's a measure of subjective well-being. Life satisfaction is an important index of subjective well-being.

### 2.3 Definition of Family Support

The concept of family support can be traced back to research in the fields of sociology, psychology and nursing. It refers to the subjective and/or objective influence of various social relations on individuals based on the family network structure, that is, to respect and meet the individual needs of family members, to provide material, emotional, life and other aspects of help for the family to maintain and improve the ability of family care (Beckert & Suckert, 2021). From the perspective of family, family support is the embodiment of social support and one of the important functions of the family. Family members provide each other with physical, emotional and informational support through communication and interaction. This support includes not only emotional care, but also promoting personal development and providing basic resources (Lynch et al., 2021). Family support includes financial support, emotional support, spiritual support, life care and growth support (Becque et al., 2021).

### 2.4 Definition of Personal Income

Personal income refers mainly to the inflow of economic benefits received by an individual, household, business, or country over a certain period of time (usually one year). These inflows can come from a variety of sources, including but not limited to employment, investment, rents, interest, dividends, etc. (Haig, 2020). Personal income includes labor income, property income, and transfer income (Azizur & Carl, 2023). Personal income is an effective indicator for predicting personal consumption power, future consumer purchasing trend and evaluating economic situation (Wilkinson, 2022).

### 2.5 The relationship between Family Support and Life Satisfaction

Family support first enhances life satisfaction by providing emotional satisfaction and psychological security (Wu et al., 2022). When individuals encounter setbacks or difficulties, the care, understanding and support of family members can give them emotional comfort, reduce psychological pressure, and enhance their confidence and ability to cope with challenges. This emotional support makes the individual feel loved and valued, which increases life satisfaction. If the

family's economic conditions permit, providing members with the necessary living expenses and medical, education and other expenses can reduce the economic burden of members, so that they are more focused on personal development and family harmony, which will improve the life satisfaction of family members. Financial stability and security are important foundations for improving life satisfaction (Sabri et al., 2021). The sharing of information and experience among family members helps individuals better cope with challenges and opportunities. The social resources and opportunities obtained through the family network can broaden an individual's social circle, increase his social capital, and further improve life satisfaction. The following empirical studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between family support and life satisfaction. Individuals with higher levels of family support generally have higher levels of life satisfaction and happiness. These studies further reveal the extent and ways in which different types of family support affect life satisfaction, providing a scientific basis for understanding and improving family support.

Evans et al. (2022) examined the different sources and types of support young people received and their relationship to mental health symptoms and life satisfaction. Research has shown that access to adequate information and material support is associated with fewer mental health symptoms. Having family support and material support is associated with higher life satisfaction. Novara et al. (2023) analyzed the structure of informal social support and its predictive power for immigrant community awareness, resilience, and life satisfaction. The results confirmed that social support predicted life satisfaction, sense of community, and resilience. The survey results highlight the sources of support and how frequently it is used, as well as the satisfaction associated with it. The findings have important practical value in facilitating interventions to improve migrant support networks and thus increase their satisfaction with life.

Yan et al. (2021) explored the relationship between subjective family socioeconomic status (FSSES), self-esteem (SE), social support (SS) and life satisfaction (LS) of Chinese adolescents. The researchers surveyed 1,510 adolescents and found a significant positive correlation between family socioeconomic status and life satisfaction. Social support is positively correlated with adolescents' life satisfaction. Cao & Zhou (2021) assessed the correlation between social support and life satisfaction in individuals with substance use

disorders, and explored the mediating role of mental resilience in these variables. The study found that social support was significantly associated with life satisfaction among people with substance use disorders. Studies have confirmed that psychological resilience plays a partial mediating role between social support and life satisfaction.

Piko(2023) explored the role of family and friend support, other family factors, and socio-demographic factors in adolescent life satisfaction. The data analysis found that family support was the strongest predictor of life satisfaction. Azpiazu et al.(2023) tested and integrated the relationship between primary sources of social support (family, friends, and teachers), trait emotional intelligence (emotional attention, clarity, and repair), and life satisfaction. The results showed that family support, emotional clarity and emotional repair played a greater role in promoting adolescents' life satisfaction.

Wang et al.(2020) examined the relationship between three types of family support and life satisfaction of Chinese elderly people. Multiple linear regression and median effect analysis were used to test the comprehensive relationship between the variables. The results showed that family emotional support and decision support were positively correlated with life satisfaction of the elderly. Ben-Shlomo et al. (2022) used self-determination theory and Bowens' family system theory to examine the combined contribution of personal resources and relationships with parents and friends to life satisfaction among young Israelis. The findings show that young women receive more parental support than young men. Family support has a significant impact on adolescents' life satisfaction. Brisson et al. (2024) examined trends in adolescents' perceived support from family, friends, classmates, and teachers and estimated the relationship between each source of support and life satisfaction. The study found that family support had the greatest impact on life satisfaction.

Zaborskis et al.(2022) investigated the relationship between adolescents' life satisfaction and family support and other family environment variables. The results showed a positive association between life satisfaction scores and high family support in all 45 countries. Orellana et al.(2021) proposed that family support is positively correlated with life satisfaction, either directly or through work-life balance, in dual-income families with children of different genders aged

10-17 years. Peng et al.(2021) investigated urban residents' satisfaction with community life from three perspectives: psychological (behavioral community participation, psychological mobility and cognitive community identity), physical (perceived residential environment quality indicators, such as green space) and social (social capital). The results showed that green space was positively correlated with community participation, community identity, social capital and life satisfaction.

## 2.6 The Relationship between Personal Income and Life Satisfaction

Personal income level is the basic index to measure economic ability, which directly affects the quality of life and consumption ability of individuals (Haig, 2020). A higher level of income often means more material resources at the disposal, which increases the possibility of individuals to realize their life aspirations and meet their needs, thus improving life satisfaction.

Celik et al.(2018) investigated the determinants of life satisfaction among elderly people in Turkey. Studies have shown that variables that reduce life satisfaction among older adults include poverty. In contrast, being married, having a higher education, and having a lucrative job increased life satisfaction among older adults. Kotakorpi & Laamanen(2010) tested the impact of public health care on welfare by combining local level public health care data with individual level life satisfaction data. The data show that being in a higher income group and being able to afford relatively high health care expenditures have a positive impact on personal life satisfaction. Suriyanrattakorn & Chang(2022) used the Global Social Mobility Index (GSMI) to investigate whether the relationship between income inequality and life satisfaction differs with different levels of social mobility. The results show that the higher the level of income inequality, the lower the national average life satisfaction. Agbanike et al. (2021) examined the impact of income (objective or perceived) on life satisfaction in Nigeria. The study found that objective income was significantly positively associated with higher satisfaction, but self-reported income was stronger. According to Kim & Crowe(2022), the effects of gender, income and religion on family members' life satisfaction are different in different families. Men with a family member with mental illness showed significant negative emotions, while men without a family member with mental illness showed no gender differences in negative emotions.



Aliyev et al. (2022) investigated the impact of institutional trust on self-reported life satisfaction in eight selected post-Soviet (non-EU) countries. The validity of the positive correlation was confirmed in pooled analysis and country-level analysis. Gaya(2021) explores the nature of the relationship between income and life satisfaction in the Study of National Income Dynamics (NIDS), evaluates the nature of the relationship between personal income and life satisfaction, and identifies a vertical relationship between income and life satisfaction. The study found that serious life dissatisfaction disappeared with higher income, but life satisfaction did not increase with higher income. Woo et al. (2022) identified a significant association between financial stress and life satisfaction and examined evidence that increased financial stress may weaken perceived social support. The study found that social support as a possible intervention mechanism and financial stress may have a negative impact on life satisfaction after retirement. Seubert et al. (2021) found that living wage and decent work can help meet the needs of life, not only meet people's survival needs, but also meet people's self-actualization needs, and affect life satisfaction at multiple levels. Psychological needs and self-actualization needs have an important impact on ability development.

### 3. Methodology

Literature analysis is the basis of this study, through the systematic collection and sorting of domestic and foreign existing literature on the relationship between family support, personal income and life satisfaction, in-depth reading and analysis. This method aims to clarify relevant concepts, review existing research results, and provide solid theoretical support and background information for this research. By reviewing the literature, we can understand the hot spots, controversial points and shortcomings in the current research field, so as to determine the research questions and hypotheses of this study. This study attempts to explore the effects of family support and personal income on life satisfaction through literature review. Through the review, the core concepts of this study include family support and personal income and life satisfaction. Through extensive collection and reading of relevant literature, researchers are able to grasp the core concepts, theoretical frameworks, research methods and the latest developments in the field. This process not only helps researchers to

establish the overall knowledge of the field, but also promotes the integration and crossover of interdisciplinary knowledge, which provides the possibility for innovative research.

### 4. Discussion

Life satisfaction is a complex multi-dimensional concept, which covers an individual's overall evaluation of their own life quality. This evaluation usually includes economic, occupational, health, family, social relations and other aspects. Although a large number of cross-cultural studies have explored life satisfaction, these studies tend to focus on developed countries or countries and regions with similar cultural backgrounds. This limits our understanding of differences in life satisfaction across cultural and social contexts. For example, collectivist cultures place different values on social relationships and family than individualistic cultures, which may affect assessments of life satisfaction.

Most studies focus on life satisfaction at a particular point in time, and longitudinal studies of individual changes over time are lacking. Life satisfaction is not static, it may change with changes in personal life stages (such as marriage, childbirth, retirement, etc.) and fluctuations in socio-economic circumstances (such as economic crises, political changes, etc.).

Many studies have focused on the impact of macro factors (e.g., gross domestic product, unemployment rate) on overall population life satisfaction, while relatively little research has been done on individual level micro factors (e.g., an individual's psychological characteristics, daily experiences, emotional regulation ability). Micro-factors are critical to understanding individual differences in life satisfaction because they directly affect an individual's emotional state and psychological needs. For some groups facing special challenges (such as immigrants, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, etc.), their living environment and social pressures may lead to the formation of life satisfaction mechanisms different from those of the mainstream population. The study of these groups can help us better understand the dynamics of life satisfaction in different social contexts.

### 5. Conclusion and Finding

In a review of studies that explored the effects of family support and personal income on life satisfaction, the

study found that the level of personal income had a significant impact on life satisfaction. The level of income not only affects the satisfaction of basic life needs, but also relates to the individual's social status and comparative income. In some studies, income ranking is even more important than absolute income because it is closely tied to an individual's social status and benchmark for comparison. Family support plays an important role in boosting life satisfaction. Family support can provide emotional comfort, financial help, and decision-making support, all of which contribute to an individual's sense of security and well-being. Increased family support was positively associated with increased life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is a multi-dimensional concept, including not only economic factors, but also health, family relations, social life and other aspects. Therefore, these different areas of life need to be considered when assessing life satisfaction.

## 6. Further study in the future

In order to understand life satisfaction more comprehensively, future research can be expanded from the following directions. First of all, cross-cultural comparative studies can be conducted under different cultural and social backgrounds to reveal the influence of cultural factors on life satisfaction. Longitudinal tracking research is also a direction of future research. Through longitudinal research design, life satisfaction changes of individuals in different life stages are tracked. Future scholars can also combine macroeconomic indicators and individual psychological characteristics to explore their combined impact on life satisfaction. An in-depth study of those who are marginalized in society, and research on marginalized groups to reveal the unique factors that may affect their life satisfaction. Through these studies, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of life satisfaction and provide a scientific basis for improving the well-being of individuals and societies.

## 7. Significance of The Research

The study of life satisfaction is helpful to enrich and develop the theoretical system of sociology, psychology and economics. Through the in-depth investigation and analysis of the life satisfaction of residents in different groups and regions, the common and different rules can be revealed, which provides new perspectives and ideas for the theoretical research of related disciplines.

The study of life satisfaction can provide scientific basis for the government to make relevant policies. Through the investigation and analysis of residents' life satisfaction, we can understand the needs and expectations of residents in different fields, and provide data support for the government to formulate more accurate social policies. In this study, literature on the impact of family support and personal income on life satisfaction was analyzed. When formulating relevant policies in the fields of family harmony and personal income, residents' needs and satisfaction could be fully considered to improve the pertinency and effectiveness of policies.

The increase in life satisfaction helps to promote social harmony and stability. When residents are satisfied with their lives, they will more actively participate in social activities, fulfill their social responsibilities, and maintain social stability. On the contrary, if residents feel dissatisfied or disappointed with their lives, they may have negative emotions, dissatisfaction and even resistance. Therefore, improving residents' life satisfaction is an important way to maintain social stability and promote social harmony.

The ultimate aim of life satisfaction research is to improve the quality of life of residents. Through in-depth study of residents' needs and expectations in different areas and various factors affecting life satisfaction, effective ways and methods can be found to improve life satisfaction. These ways and methods can guide residents to improve their own living conditions and lifestyles, improve the quality of life and happiness.

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