

Materialism, Religiosity and Subjective Well-being
In Relation to Age

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(Regn. No.: MZU/M.Phil./333 of 22.04.2016)

Dissertation Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Psychology

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
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2016



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the present research work titled, “Materialism, Religiosity and Subjective Well-being in Relation to Age” is the original research work carried out by Ms. Lalrintluangi under my supervision. The work done is being submitted for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Psychology of Mizoram University.

This is to further certify that the research conducted by Ms. Lalrintluangi has not been submitted in support of an application to this or any other University or an Institute of Learning.

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DECLARATION

I, Lalrintluangi, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled, “Materialism, Religiosity and Subjective Well-being in Relation to Age” is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this dissertation did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University or Institute.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Psychology.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As I am preparing to close the chapter of my life as an M.Phil research scholar I would like to thank the Almighty God for His guidance and mercy.

My sincere thanks also goes to the faculty at the Department of Psychology, Mizoram University for giving me an opportunity to do research and encouraging me and providing me help and feedback when needed.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Zoengpari, who has supported me throughout my research with her patience and immense knowledge whilst allowing me the room to work in my own way. She encouraged me to see each obstacle encountered as an opportunity to evolve.

I would also like to thank Guest Faculties at the Department of Psychology. I would particularly like to mention Dr. Zoramhmagaihzuai Kiangte, Guest Faculty at the Department of Psychology, for her assistance and insight in statistics, helping me complete my research.

I also thank my fellow research scholars for their insights and feedback. We spent many wonderful moments during our research work, as well as many sleepless nights working on deadlines.

To my family, my mother and my sisters, who love me and offered devotion, love, and faith in understanding the importance to me of what I was undertaking. To my mother who assisted in all the ways that she knew how.

Date: 10.12.2016

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. MVS Material Value Scale
2. RCI Religious Commitment Inventory
3. SWLS Satisfaction With Life Scale

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

Materialism is growing at global level and the developing countries being interested and attracted to the western world are expected to experience the effect more severely (Ghadrian, 2010). With globalization, material possession has become more significant in one's life which is reflected from the pride one finds in possessing and owning material goods (Manchanda, R., et. al., 2015). India is the second most materialistic country among certain Asia-Pacific Countries as shown by survey on 'Global Attitudes on Materialism, Finances and Family' (conducted by Ipsos - an independent leading market research firm, December 2013). Materialism is bound to increase as a phenomenon in all cultures and in all types of economies, even if there is a lack of material goods (Ger & Belk, 1996; Parker et. al., 2010) or available in abundance (Schaefer et al., 2004). Social and cultural prestige associated with possessions helps to perpetuate materialistic values (Seher-Ersoy Quadir, 2012).

Materialism is a topic of interest for many field of study and the topic has been important throughout the history. However with the growth in globalization, materialism has occupied a more important place in the field of research these past decades. Thus materialism has been defined from various fields of study including philosophy, psychology, political science, consumer behavior, and family sciences. As a result, there is not one agreed-upon conceptual framework that researchers use to examine materialism.

Throughout history philosophers considered individual conceptions of well-being to be the highest good and ultimate motivation for human action and for centuries, there have been philosophers, politicians and religious leaders who have argued that a life focused around materialistic aspiration is unhealthy, antisocial or immoral and will harm subjective well-being (SWB). Materialism among today's youth has received strong interest among

educators, parents, consumer activist and government regulators for several reasons (Korten, 1999). However, with such a growing concern about adolescent becoming too materialistic, research into this area has paid little attention to ‘young adults’ and their endorsement of materialistic values. Fromm (1976) distinguishes between a ‘having’ or consumer orientation and a ‘being’ or experiential orientation to life (in Van Boven & Gilovich, 2003). According to Jonathan Haidt’s (2006) happiness hypothesis, people should ‘accumulate less and consume more’. In a series of articles and columns initiating the science of “positive psychology” (Seligman 1998, 1999; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) has begun to sketch the scaffold of a comprehensive taxonomy of human strength and civic virtues. Three broad domains, or “pillars,” are (a) positive subjective experience, (b) positive personal and interpersonal traits, and (c) positive institutions and communities. Positive subjective experiences include the intra-psychic states of happiness and life satisfaction, flow, contentment, optimism, and hope.

SWB is generally defined as an individual’s cognitive evaluation of life, the presence of positive or pleasant emotions, and the absence of negative or unpleasant emotions (Oishi, S., et al., 1999). Pleasant emotions include happiness, joy, contentment, and elation; unpleasant emotions include sadness, anxiety, depression, and danger (Diener, et. al., 1999). The cognitive component of SWB, life satisfaction, is measured most commonly through the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, et. al., 1985). The construct of SWB itself encompasses evaluations of one’s life in terms of judgments of overall life satisfaction as well as one’s experience of pleasant and unpleasant emotions. Generally speaking, SWB includes happiness, joy, satisfaction, enjoyment, fulfillment, pleasure, and contentment. SWB exists on a continuum, ranging from states of very low well-being (including severe depression and hopelessness) to those of very high well-being (genuine happiness). Subjective well-being (SWB) is also defined as individuals’ cognitive and

affective assessments regarding their life satisfaction (Diener, 1984) and that people experience greater SWB, when they feel happier, are involved in interesting activities, when they experience more pleasure, and are generally satisfied with their lives (Diener, 2000) .

Subjective well-being and life satisfaction, for the purpose of this study, will be used synonymously. In an empirical research studies, SWB is often assessed as happiness and life satisfaction (Myers, 2000). The satisfaction of needs causes happiness (Myers, 1960, as cited in La Barbera & Gurhan, 1997) and the sources of life satisfaction exist in personality, culture, family, faith, friendship, marriage, work and education (Tatzel, 2003). SWB is a multi-faceted concept that comprises people's life satisfaction, their evaluation of their life domains such as work, health and relationships, and how they think and feel about these aspects of their lives (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008).

Scientific assessment of subjective well-being gained prominence in the 1960s (e.g., Bradburn 1969; Bradburn & Caplovitz 1965; Gurin, et. al., 1960) as social scientists dissatisfied with macroeconomic indicants of human welfare (e.g., GDP, rates of employment, etc.) sought alternative measures of personal well-being. This literature, which now encompasses thousands of studies, commonly views well-being as consisting of three separate but related components: (1) cognitive evaluations of the conditions of one's life (e.g., overall life satisfaction), (2) positive affective states (e.g., happiness), and (3) negative affective states (e.g., depression) (Campbell 1981; Diener et al. 1985).

A number of theories, including telic and judgment theories, predict a negative correlation between SWB and materialism. Telic or endpoint theories of SWB contend that well-being is obtained when a state, such as a goal, is achieved or a need satisfied (Diener, 1984). Wilson (1960) postulates that the "satisfaction of needs causes happiness and conversely, the persistence of unfulfilled needs causes unhappiness." According to this view,

more materialistic consumers are presumed to believe that any given level of possessions is inadequate to meet their goals; therefore, they will feel more dissatisfied, in comparison with less materialistic consumers. Some judgment theories maintain that SWB results from a comparison between some standard, such as other people and actual conditions (Diener, 1984). Another popular judgment theory is based on aspiration levels (Carp & Carp, 1982; McGill, 1967; Wilson, 1960), which asserts that attitudes regarding SWB reflect the gap between what people aspire to and what they perceive themselves as having that is SWB depends on the discrepancy between actual conditions and aspirations (Andrews & Robinson, 1991; Carp & Carp, 1982). According to adaptation theory, only recent changes produce happiness and unhappiness because a person will eventually adapt to prevailing levels of satisfaction (Diener, 1984). On the basis of these theoretical approaches, it can be concluded that if people expect material possessions to bring SWB, they may in fact experience satisfaction with those possessions for a time, but through adaptation processes will eventually feel dissatisfied (Richins, 1986). The Aspiration theory (Andrew & Robinson 1991 in La Barbera & Gürhan, 1997) predicts that highly materialistic people with lower levels of education and/or income will feel frustrated with their ability to satisfy their materialistic desires compared to similarly materialistic people with higher levels of education and/or income. This, in turn, would negatively impact the SWB assessment of those who are highly materialistic but less well off financially and educationally. Additionally, the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) posits that goals based on extrinsic reward, that is separable from the activity itself as opposed to intrinsic reward, which is satisfaction inherent in the activity may be related to negative SWB, that Extrinsic rewards cannot satisfy the needs for competence, belongingness and autonomy in individuals. This can result in less self-actualization and a reduced SWB. The environment-match perspective on the other hand emphasizes the importance of values. The effect of materialism

on SWB depends on the value congruence between individuals and the environment to which they belong (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000), a match between one's own values and the values endorsed by the environment increases SWB, whereas a mismatch decreases SWB.

This study will view materialism as a value taking on the perspective of Richins. Values are enduring beliefs about what is fundamentally important. Richins sees materialism as a system of personal values. The MVS defines materialism as the ownership and acquisition of material goods to achieve major life goals or desired states. (e.g., Fournier & Richins, 1991; Richins, 1994a, 1994b; Richins & Dawson, 1992). The MVS treats materialism as a value that influences the way people interpret their environment and structure their lives and divides materialism into three parts: centrality, happiness, and success - the extent to which people believe acquisitions signal success, the extent to which people believe possessions are necessary for their own happiness, and the overall importance or centrality that possessions play in people's lives (Richins & Dawson, 1992). People are considered to be materialistic as a function of their endorsement of these beliefs (Shrum, et al, 2012). Thus, material goods are the core of their life, source of their happiness and the criteria they used to judge success. There are conflicting ideas about materialism in societal messages.

Materialism is defined from various social, cultural, psychological, and economic perspectives: a way of life, a value orientation, a cultural system, a personality trait, a second-order value, an aspiration (e.g., Daun, 1983; Fox & Lears 1983; Ward & Wackman, 1971; Inglehart, 1981; Mukerji, 1983; Belk 1984; Richins & Dawson, 1990; Kasser & Ryan, 2002). Thus, broadly defined, materialism is any excessive reliance on consumer goods to achieve the end states of pleasure, self-esteem, good interpersonal relationship or high social status, any consumption-based orientation to happiness-seeking and a high importance of material

issues in life (Ger & Belk, 1999). Today, in common usage, materialism is associated with a tendency to consider material possessions and physical comfort as more important than spiritual values (Oxford Dictionaries, 2012). Materialism has been investigated by researchers from several different fields of study, including philosophy, psychology, political science, consumer behavior, and family sciences. As a result, there is not one agreed-upon conceptual framework that researchers use to examine materialism. In fact, research on materialism at this stage can be thought of in terms of a theoretical dichotomy—researchers disagree about whether materialism is a personality trait or a value. The majority of modern materialism research is built on the work of two consumer behavior researchers in the 1980s—Russell W. Belk and Marsha L. Richins. Both had distinct approaches to materialism, and both created scales that typify these approaches. These scales are still used in the majority of materialism research today. The most prominent conceptualizations of materialism are those of consumer researchers like Belk (1985) who sees materialism as a personality trait, Richins and Dawson’s (1992) regard of materialism as a value, Inglehart’s (1990) economic and sociological view of materialism.

At present, society places considerable emphasis on materialistic values, but at the same time, it emphasizes more collective-oriented values such as family cohesion, community ties, and religious fulfillment (Burroughs and Rindfleisch, 2002). Similarly, psychological theories have expressed opposing views about materialism. The term “materialism” refers to how important material goods are to a person’s life with the implication that materialistic people have an excessive concern for material objects (Goldsmith and Clark, 2012). A substantial body of research in consumer behavior and psychology suggest that individuals who hold strong value of materialistic appear to be less happy and thus more dissatisfied with their lives compared to individuals who are less materialistic (Belk, 1984; Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002; Sirgy, 1998). Belk (1985) also found that

there was a negative relationship between materialism and life satisfaction. Similarly, Richins & Dawson (1992) found that materialists are less satisfied with their life. Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002) reviewed 19 articles published in psychology, economics as well as consumer behavior in regards to the association between materialism and well-being and found considerable support for the notion that materialism is negatively associated with well-being.

Most religions in different cultures around the world instill values, norms, and expectations of what is right or wrong and guide people to behave ethically. As defined by Krippner et. al (2001), religion is adherence to an organized system of beliefs about the divine, along with the observance of rituals, rites, the following of text, and meeting the requirements of an organized system of beliefs. According to Emmons (as cited in Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006), religion may be a route toward intimacy, meaning, status, comfort, or a variety of other strivings.

Over the past two decades, there has been an increased interest in the role of religiosity and spirituality on mental health and well being. Religiousness is a reflection of a social entity entailing particular beliefs, customs, and boundaries, whereas spirituality is concerned with transcendent aspects of personal existence (Miller & Thoresen, 2003), and refers to personal, subjective aspect of religious experience (Hill & Pargament, 2008). Religiosity is a broad term that refers to the religious beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours of an individual. Many define religiosity as both beliefs and practices relating to an organized religious affiliation or a specified divine power (e.g., Pargament, 1997; Shafranske & Malony, 1990). Religiosity involves thinking, feeling, and behaving in accordance to doctrinal beliefs, which are endorsed in a religious institution (Zinnbauer, et al., 1997). Different scholars have used different measures of religiosity. Ellison et al., (1989) suggested

that measures of religiosity include three distinct dimensions: religious participation- focuses on the level activity in organized religious activities, religious affiliation- concerns the degree of identification and integrated with religious community, and religious devotional- examines the individual's belief or personal religious experience. Another approach views religiosity either as a means or as an end in itself. The most popular expression of this view has been Allport's (1950) concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic religiousness. According to Allport & Ross (1967), intrinsically religious people are genuinely committed to their faith, while extrinsically religious people are more self-serving. They stated that, "the extrinsically-motivated person uses his religion, whereas the intrinsically-motivated lives his religion." They may use religion for personal benefits, and for social rewards (McFarland, 1989; Haerich, 1992). Donahue (1985) found his intrinsic dimension to correlate positively with religious commitment.

However, Religious commitment is a term loosely used to reflect degree or level of religiosity. It attempts to capture how internally committed the person is to his religion. One of the best indicators of religious commitment is the estimation of intrinsic religious motivation or intrinsic religiosity. Persons described as having an intrinsic orientation to religion have been described as living their religious beliefs, the influence of which religion is evident in every aspect of their life (Joshi & Kumari, 2011). Worthington et al. (2003) defined religious commitment as "the degree to which a person adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, and practices and uses them in daily living". In other words, religious commitment indicates the amount of time spent in private religious involvement, religious affiliation, the activities of religious organization, and importance of religious beliefs, which are practiced in intrapersonal and interpersonal daily living (Worthington et al., 2003). Worthington (1988) used a religious commitment model to look more closely at how religion affects individuals both positively and negatively and under what conditions. He

hypothesized that the extent to which individuals were positively affected by religion were those who were the most committed to their religion (Worthington, 1988). Religious commitment or religiosity was chosen for study because it strongly influences an individual's emotional experiences, thinking, behavior, and psychological well-being (Chamberlain & Zika, 1992; McDaniel & Burnett, 1990; Pollner, 1989; Witter, Stock, Okun, & Haring, 1985).

Bergan and McConatha's (2000) in their study demonstrated a small positive relation between religiosity and happiness across all three age groups (adolescents, young adults, and adults in later life): "Overall, the results of studies examining religiosity and life satisfaction generally indicate that people who express stronger religious faith and involvement also report fewer stressful life events and greater life satisfaction". Religiosity may indeed enhance subjective well-being in at least two ways- through social integration and support. Places of worship serve as a setting and provide opportunities for social interaction between people who share similar values (Witter et al., 1985) and enable them to enjoy larger, more reliable and supportive informal social networks (Ellison, 1991). Religious communities could enhance an individual's subjective happiness by promoting norms regarding personal lifestyles, such as interpersonal and familial relationships, and health behaviors (Ellison, 1991). Through personal relationship with a divine other, people might develop divine relationships in a quest for solace and guidance (Pollner, 1989) which makes major crises more manageable through personal partnership with a more powerful force (Ellison, 1991). A belief in and commitment to divine relationships allow people to attribute responsibility for especially difficult life events to a divine presence (Spilka & Schmidt, 1983) which acts as a buffer to negative emotions and enhance Subjective Well-being.

Studies have reported a positive relationship between religiosity and life satisfaction. When demographic factors (such as race and educational level) are controlled for, religiosity or religious activities are often cited as among the most significant predictors of life satisfaction (Chamberlain and Zika, 1988; Ellison et al., 1989; Hunsberger, 1985; Poloma & Pendleton, 1988; Ellison, 1991). Specifically, positive relationships have been found between religious commitment and life satisfaction, and between religious affiliation and life satisfaction (Hadaway and Roof, 1978; Ellison et al., 1989). In a review of the literature, Dew et al (2008) found that the measurement of religiosity varied across studies, with most studies defining religiosity as church attendance, religious beliefs, religious affiliation, or religious importance; however, Dew et al (2008) indicated that irrespective of the definition employed, 92% of the articles reviewed indicated that religiosity was associated with adolescents' psychological well being (e.g., decreased substance use, depression, suicidal ideation, anxiety, and delinquency). In a separate review, Wong, Rew, and Slaikeu (2006) found religiosity/spirituality (e.g., importance of religion, religious coping, prayer/church attendance, spiritual transcendence) to be related to psychological health (e.g., less depression/anxiety, more positive affect, better relationships, self-esteem) in 90% of articles they reviewed. Additionally, in his cross-cultural theory, Hofstede shows that cultures have different levels of importance of values (in Kilbourne et al. 2004); one area of difference is individualism versus collectivism. Individuals who live in collectivistic cultures will also experience reduced SWB in the presence of materialism as a result of value conflict. Karabati and Cemalcilar (2008) found that self-enhancement was positively related to materialism, indicating that people in an individualistic culture experience little value conflict with materialism. Like materialism, religiosity has been examined at both the societal and individual levels. The earliest studies in this area were conducted at the societal level, such as investigations into the relationship between religious involvement and aggregate rates of

suicide and other forms of social problems. At individual level of analysis, researchers tend to relate religiosity to individual's well-being and perceptions of life quality (Ellison, 1991).

However, several studies have shown negative relationship between materialism and religiosity, religious people are less materialistic (eg., LaBarbera & Gu`rhan, 1997; Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002). Religiosity affects a person's desire for material possessions, since the desire and acquisition of material possessions have been linked to one's quality of life (Burroughs & Rindfleisch 2002; George 2010). Religious people are viewed as dogmatic due to their stronger commitment to their religion (Mokhlis 2006; Rindfleisch et al. 2004), and the strength and nature of one's religious beliefs can affect the person's consumption behaviors (Fournier 1998; Mokhlis 2006; Burroughs & Rindfleisch 2002; Rindfleisch et al. 2004). Research on materialists found that they were inclined toward values of power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, and self-direction to one's own individual interests, while the values of benevolence, community, and group interests were associated with the collective interests of spiritualists (Oishi, et. al., 1999; Schwartz, 1992 In M. Zanna). The findings imply that people high in materialism favor possessions over human relationships because possessions give them mastery and control over others. Burroughs and Rindfleisch, (2002) found that internal conflict increases in situations of high materialism for participants with religious values. The majority of research on materialistic values has found that materialistic values conflict with spiritual collective ideals about choosing to be of service to others (Arndt, Solomon, Kasser, & Sheldon, 2004; Cohen & Cohen, 1996; Kasser & Kanner, 2004; Kasser & Ryan, 1993, 1996, 2001).

Based on scientific and empirical research conducted in different cultural setting, and sample populations, age appears to diminish people's materialism; that is, when people grow old, they attach less importance to material possessions than other things. Larsen et al.

(1999) propose that children are likely to be more materialistic than young adults, and young adults more materialistic than older adults. Flouri's (2004) findings also show that there is a positive relationship between age and materialism. However, there are contradictory reports. In a survey by Achenreiner (1997) the findings indicated the materialistic attitudes of one age group were not significantly different, from those of other age groups. The findings of this study indicated that materialism varied only marginally with age. Generally speaking, older people care less about material possessions and feel happier than younger people. Contrary to the views that materialism increases with age, Brouskeli & Loumakou (2014) found that materialism decreases with age. Chaplin & John (2007) also report that materialism declines from early (12-13 years) to late adolescence (16-18 years).

Goldberg et al. (2003) found that young people's heightened focus on materialism in the U.S. led them to have negative attitudes toward school and performed poorly in school. Goldberg et al. (2003) also suggested that these can push them to be sexually promiscuous, drug addicts and some can eventually commit suicides. Generally, age diminishes people's materialism; that is, when people grow old, they attach less importance to material possessions than other things (for example, Chaplin & John, 2007). Several generational differences in materialism were identified in research. For instance, Furby (1978) suggested that infants attempted to overcome dependence on others by actively acquiring possessions. According to Sheldon and Kasser (2001), older people appears to care less about material possessions and feel happier than younger people, and empirical research reports (LaFerle & Chan, 2008) points towards the same direction. Theories of age effects in SWB generally assumes that SWB is determined by the objective conditions of our life (e.g., social support, income, health), which tend to worsen as we age (Diener & Suh 1998). SWB is also influenced by our ability to control our emotion, which tends to improve as we age (Carstensen 1995; Lawton 1996). Thus, depending on the theories that are used as a reference

some argued SWB to increase with age while others argued SWB to decrease with age. Most research shows that SWB for most individuals increases with age (e.g., Campbell et al., 1976; Herzog & Rodgers, 1981; Herzog, et. al., 1982; Long et al., 1990; Miaoulis & Cooper, 1987; Tomes, 1986; Usui et al., 1985). However there are also findings that indicated that SWL remains stable and does not really vary across age group (Diener & Suh,1998). Following the same trend, religiosity tend to increases with age, people become more religious as they grow older (Wink and Dillon, 2001). However not all researcher agree that religiousness increases with age. For example, Davie and Vincent (1998) review evidence suggesting that researchers may merely be observing cohort and not age effect. Nevertheless, when taken as a whole, there is some evidence in the literature that religiousness increases with age. If this is true, and a central function of religion is to provide a sense of meaning in life, then perhaps religious meaning may become increasingly important as people grow older.

A number of literatures on materialism address gender differences that could possibly lead to different materialistic levels. In some cross-culture studies conducted by Eastman et al (1997), result show that males tend to place more emphasis on achieving success with worldly possessions. However, the difference is quite subtle and complicated. In the case of durable goods such as cars, men are much more disposed towards conspicuous consumption than women (Bloch, 1981). Nevertheless, in the market of high fashion clothing, women are more prone to conspicuous consumption than men, and they use apparel more often than males to show status and construct identity (O’Cass, 2001). These results are consistent with the gender differences that men value in dependence and activity, while women are more emotionally and relationship oriented (Dittmar, 1989). Bindah and Othman (2012) in their study found significant differences in terms of gender and materialism. It appeared that young female adults have a more positive attitude towards materialistic values than their male counterpart. Research to date suggests that religiosity generally has positive

effects on mental health outcomes in both adults and youth. Gender was found to be related to the degree of religiosity involving gender differences in religious involvement. Previous research by the aforementioned researchers revealed that Black females were more religiously involved than their Black male counterparts. Gender differences in religiosity are well known. Studies of religious beliefs and religious behavior have demonstrated consistently that females are more religious than males. They are more likely to express greater interest in religion, have a stronger personal religious commitment. Women tend to perceive more risk and to be more risk-averse than men in general, and in turn risk aversion is associated with higher religiosity. Furthermore, another interesting finding was the relationship between the degree of religiosity and self-esteem. Still, there is some controversy about the interplay of religion and gender in subjective well-being although Moberg (1965) proposes that religion is a less important determinant of well-being among men than women because of its less central role in the life of men. Witter, et al. (1985) find no evidence to support this position. Inasmuch as religion serves as a “coping mechanism” for elderly people (Cox & Hammonds 1988; Courtenay, et al. 1992) who may dwell on matters of “ultimate concern” (Koenig, et. al 1988), religious participation is likely to be particularly important in subjective well-being among the aged. Again, the empirical evidence overwhelmingly supports this conjecture. For example, Blazer & Palmore (1976) and Guy (1982) use longitudinal data to demonstrate that the importance of religion in self reported well-being increases over the life span (see also Witter, et al. 1985 and Koenig, George, and Siegler 1988). With regards to the effect of gender on SWB there is a mixed report on several studies. Generally men have slightly higher, but not statistically significant, levels of material satisfaction (Alwin, 1987; Tomes, 1986). Haring, Stock and Okun (1984) reported that men have slight higher tendency to report higher levels of positive well-being whereas Wood, Rhodes and Wheelan (1989) reported a slight benefit for women (particularly in measures of

happiness and life satisfaction). Several classic studies found no difference in reported happiness between men and women (e.g., Bradburn, 1969; Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965; Gurin, Veroff, & Feld, 1960).

At present, society places considerable emphasis on materialistic values, but at the same time, it emphasizes more collective-oriented values such as family cohesion, community ties, and religious fulfillment. Similarly, psychological theories have expressed opposing views about materialism. A substantial body of research suggests that individuals who hold strong value of materialistic appear to be less happy and thus more dissatisfied with their lives compared to individuals who are less materialistic, while some found that materialists are less satisfied with their life. Throughout history philosophers considered individual conceptions of well-being to be the highest good and ultimate motivation for human action and for centuries, there have been philosophers, politicians and religious leaders who have argued that a life focused around materialistic aspiration is unhealthy, antisocial or immoral and will harm subjective well-being. Religious commitment or religiosity was also chosen for the present study because it strongly influences an individual's emotional experiences, thinking, behavior, and psychological well-being. The present study attempts to elucidate the relationship and highlight the collective-oriented values of the population under study.

CHAPTER – II
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Materialism is growing at global level and the developing countries being interested and attracted to the western world are expected to experience the effect more severely (Ghadrian, 2010). With globalization, material possession has become more significant in one's life which is reflected from the pride one finds in possessing and owning material goods (Manchanda, R., Abidi, N., Mishra, J. K. 2015). Materialism among today's youth has received strong interest among educators, parents, consumer activist and government regulators for several reasons (Korten, 1999). According to Goldberg et al. (2003), young people's heightened focus on materialism in the U.S. led them to have negative attitudes toward school and performed poorly in school. Goldberg et al. (2003) also suggest that these can push them to be sexually promiscuous, drug addicts and some can eventually commit suicides.

Also, several generational differences in materialism have been identified in research. Based on scientific and empirical research conducted in different cultural setting, and sample populations, age appears to diminish people's materialism; that is, when people grow old, they attach less importance to material possessions than other things. There also are evidences that materialism levels vary by age that children are likely to be more materialistic than young adults, and young adults more materialistic than older adults. Also, that there is a positive relationship between age and materialism. Also, recent years have seen a tremendous growth in research on the causes and correlates of happiness, or subjective well-being and examination of the relationships among consumption, consumer aspirations, and well-being as well as the relationship between subjective well-being and religion or religiosity. Additionally, a number of literatures on materialism addressing gender differences have also been published. However, till today, there is not one agreed-upon conceptual framework that researchers use to examine materialism.

The present study will be an attempt to explore if differences exist between the two age groups on the behavioral constructs - materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being, and elucidate and explore gender differences within each age group and examine the relationship between materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being.

Review of literature indicates that no research has been conducted regarding the topic of materialism and the role of age and sex in the Mizo population. This study would be the first in Mizoram to explore the role of age and sex on materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being and the relationship therein. Mizo being a collectivist society who places religion/ religiosity values to be very important, the emphasis on religiosity would be very helpful in understanding the role that it plays in the overall subjective well-being of the two age groups selected for the present study. From the light of the literature reviews, it seems that religion will most likely have a great impact on Mizo's subjective well-being. According to the Mizoram Statistical Handbook released in 2010 number of Christians is 7,72,809 (86.97%), number of Hindus is 31,562 (3.55%), number of Muslim is 10,099 (1.13%), Sikhism 326 (0.03%), Buddhism 70494 (7.93%), Jainism 179 (0.02%), others 2443 (0.07%) and people without religion is 661(0.07). These figures indicate that Mizos are basically a religious people. In a society where the entire social life and thought-process has been transformed and guided by the Christian doctrines and teachings and perceptions of what is right or wrong is based on Christian beliefs, as is judgment of what is moral and immoral, frequently, pursuing material wealth is viewed as empty or shallow and precludes one's investment in family, friends, self-actualization and participation in social community (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Belk 1985, 1988; Richins 1987; Kasser and Ryan 1993). Theologians and philosophers have long complained that materialism is incompatible with a virtuous life. Although there are also studies that investigate the

relationship between religiosity and well-being at the societal level, this paper will attempt to relate the religious commitment at the level of individuals' subjective well-being.

An extensive review of literature found no published articles focusing on the relationship between the mentioned behavioral constructs in Mizoram. It is therefore, felt necessary to explore these variables in Aizawl District. The overall consideration would not only help satisfy to achieve the theoretical and methodological considerations but would provide foundations for behavioral intervention programs and further extended studies. For this purpose, the present study was designed with the following objectives.

1. To explore the level of materialism in the two age groups.
2. To explore the degree of religiosity in the two age groups.
3. To explore the level of subjective well being in the two age groups.
4. To explore the relationship between materialism, religious commitment and subjective well-being in the two age groups.
5. To highlight gender differences for each age group on the behavioral constructs of the study.
6. To examine the relationship between the behavioral constructs.
7. To highlight the role of socio-demographic variables.

Hypothesis:

1. It is expected that measures of level of materialism and subjective well-being will be significantly and negatively related.
2. It is expected that there will be a significant positive relationship between religious commitment and subjective well-being.
3. It is expected that there will be a significant negative relationship between religious commitment and levels of materialism.
4. It is expected that there will be a significant differences on the behavioral constructs between the two age groups.
5. It is expected that there will be a significant gender differences on the behavioral constructs for each of the age groups selected for the study.
6. It is expected that the socio demographic variables will play a role in explaining variation between age groups and between gender.

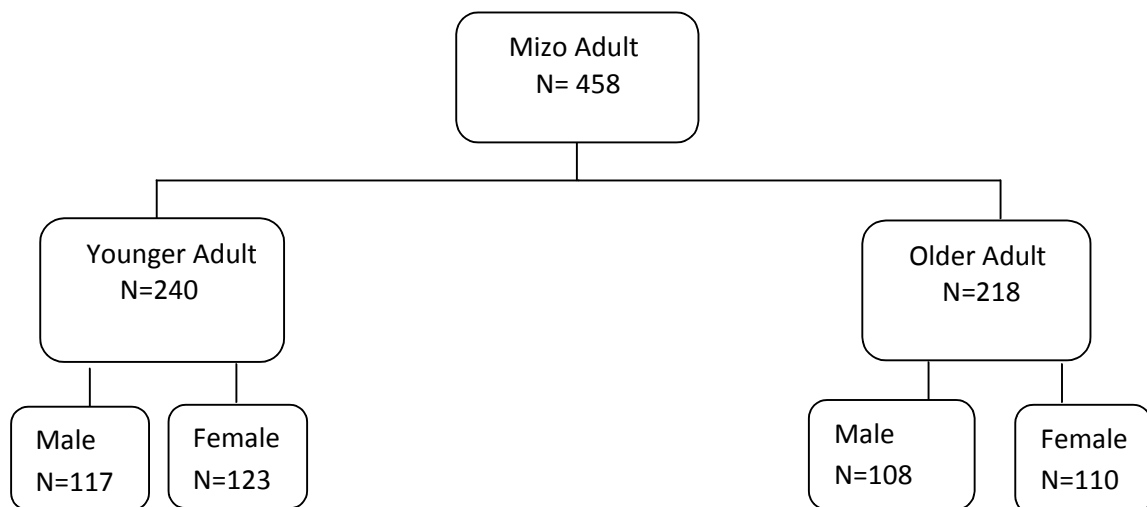
CHAPTER – III

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

Samples: The sample consisted of 458 randomly selected Mizo adults comprising of 225 males and 233 females, with the age range 20 – 40 years (240) and (50 – 70) years (218) were randomly sampled from the four zones of Aizawl city i.e., east, west, north and south. Two localities were again randomly selected from each zone, thus the sample were finally taken from 8 localities of Aizawl.

Median split method was used to distinguish the subjects as scoring low or high on the three behavioral constructs (materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being) measured. The socio-demographic background information of the subjects like age, gender, educational qualification, occupation, permanent residence, family structure etc will be recorded to match the subjects in order to maintain the homogeneity of the sample.

Design of the study: The study shall employ 2x2 factorial design (2 age group x 2 sex). The participants between 20-40 years of age (younger adult) and 50-70 years of age (older age) will be randomly selected from the four zones (i.e. East, West, North, South) of Aizawl and represent the participants on the age group (younger adult and older age) and two sex (male and female) shall represent the corresponding levels on the variables. The design shall be depicted as below:



Procedure: The primary data for the study was collected in a face to face interaction between the participants and the researcher in an optimal environmental setting. After formation of a good rapport booklets containing measures of the variables were given to the subject containing the following scales: Material Value Scale (MVS) Religious Commitment Inventory (RCI) and Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS). The researcher took care to see that the respondents provided honest and independent answers to the questions presented. The anonymity, confidentiality and ethics as cited/formulated by APA, 2003 (American Psychiatric Association) was followed.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOLS:

The Material Value Scales (Marsha L. Richins, 2004): Material Value Scale was used to measure the degree to which individuals were preoccupied with materialistic values to guide their actions, attitudes, self-concept, and goal dev and effort. Higher scores reflect greater materialism. MVS has three domains referred to as the success, centrality, and happiness domains, respectively. The MVS contains 15 items that constitute three subscales designed to tap into each of these domains. A five-point Likert scale response format is used (*strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree*). The reliability coefficient in present study was found ($\alpha = 0.73$).

The Religious Commitment Inventory (Worthington, E. L., Jr., et al, 2012): The RCI-10, which is consistent with Worthington's (1988) model of religious values in counseling, was constructed to be both a brief screening (Level 1) assessment of religious commitment and an ecumenical assessment of religious commitment (Richards & Bergin, 1997). RCI-10 is used to measure the degree to which a person adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, and practices and uses them in daily living. A five-point Likert scale response format is used (not at all true of me, somewhat true of me, moderately true of me, mostly true of me, totally true of me). The reliability coefficient in present study was found ($\alpha = 0.85$).

Satisfaction with life Scale: Subjective well-being is measured using satisfaction with life scale (Diener, 1985). SWLS is used to measure global life satisfaction from respondent's subjective perspective. It consists of five items. Each item is to be rated on 7-point rating scale (*1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree*). Possible scale scores range from 5 to 35 with high score meaning high satisfaction and low score suggested low life satisfaction. The reliability coefficient in present study was found ($\alpha = 0.76$).

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS :

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 19. For the analysis of data, suitable statistical techniques were adopted for the present study:

1. Descriptive statistics – mean, standard deviation, reliability of the scales were employed to check the reliability and normal distribution of scores.
2. Pearson's coefficient of correlation is used to determine the relationship between materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being.
3. Kruskal-Wallis and Steel-Dwass test was used to highlight the role of socio demographic variables.
4. Nonparametric statistics was used in the study, since the values for skewness and kurtosis of certain variables were not found to be satisfactory for use of parametric statistics - Kruskal -Wallis was used to highlight age difference and gender difference on the behavioral constructs if any.

CHAPTER – IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Psychometric properties of the behavioral measures:

Table 1: Descriptive

| Scales | Cronbach's Alpha | Mean | SD |
|--------|------------------|-------|------|
| MVS | 0.73 | 25.54 | 4.73 |
| RCI | 0.85 | 21.42 | 6.20 |
| SWLS | 0.76 | 3.79 | 1.01 |

Psychological test(s) of proven psychometric adequacy for a given population, when used for measurement purpose in another cultural milieu, may change their psychometric properties, and unless preliminary checks are made, may not be accepted as the reliable measure(s) of the theoretical construct (Witkin & Berry, 1975; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1985). The reliability and predictive validity of the scales were ascertained to ensure the psychometric adequacy of the scales used for the study. Internal consistency reliability was estimated for each of the scales used in the study using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. Inter-items correlation less than 0.2 were excluded (i.e., items 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 14 and 15) from Material Value Scale and the reliability was 0.73. For Religious Commitment Inventory the reliability of the scale was 0.85, and for Satisfaction With Life Scale the reliability was found to be 0.76. Results revealed that the total coefficient of correlation of the subjects emerged to be satisfactory over the levels of analysis for the whole sample, indicating the trustworthiness of the scales.

Levels of materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being

In this study 49.1% of all the samples are male and 50.9% are female. Age group (20 – 40) constitutes 52.4% of the total sample and age group (50 – 70) constitutes 47.6% of the entire sample.

Analysis of level of materialism revealed that 54.4% of the total subjects' scores fell in the High level of MVS, 45.6% of the subjects fell under the low MVS level. In the age group (20 – 40) years 59.6% of the subjects' score fell in high level of MVS, and in age group (50 – 70) 48.6% of the subject fell in the high level of MVS. 55.6% of males' score fell under high MVS and 53.2% of females' score fell in high level of MVS.

Analysis of level of religiosity revealed that 56.3% of the total subjects' scores fell in the High level of RCI, 43.7% of the subjects fell under the low RCI level. In the age group (20 – 40) years 37.9% of the subjects' score fell in high level of RCI, and in age group (50 – 70) 63.8% of the subject fell in the high level of RCI. 44.4% of males' score fell under high RCI and 55% of females' score fell in high level of RCI.

Analysis of level of subjective well-being revealed that 50.4% of the total subjects' scores fell in the High level of SWLS, 49.6% of the subjects fell under the low SWLS level. In the age group (20 – 40) years 52.1% of the subjects' score fell in high level of SWLS, and in age group (50 – 70) 48.6% of the subject fell in the high level of SWLS. 49.3% of males' score fell under high SWLS and 51.5% of females' score fell in high level of SWLS.

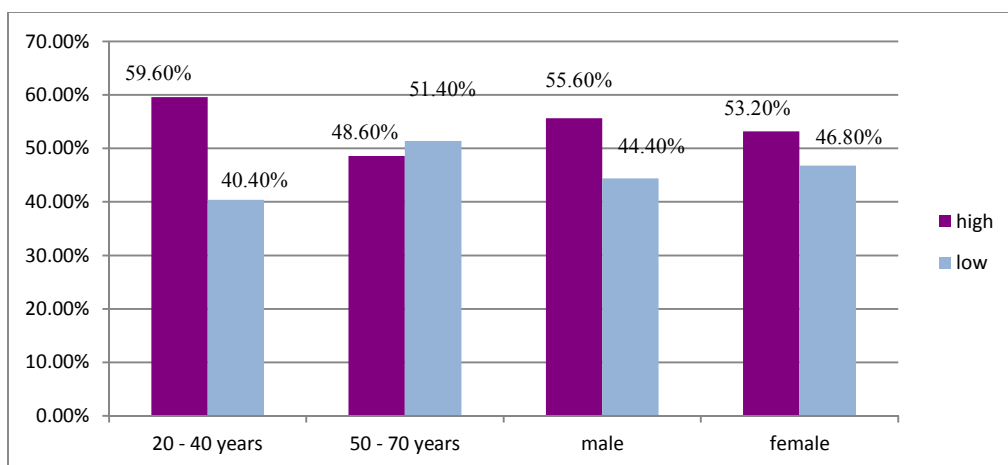


Figure 1: levels of materialism

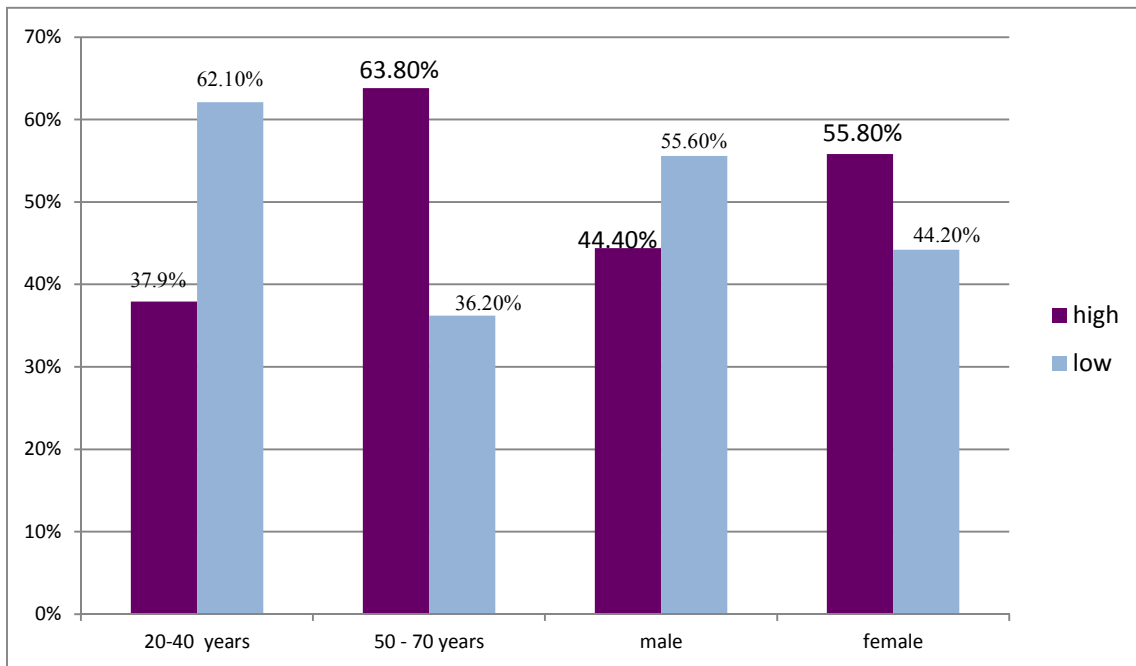


Figure 2: levels of religiosity

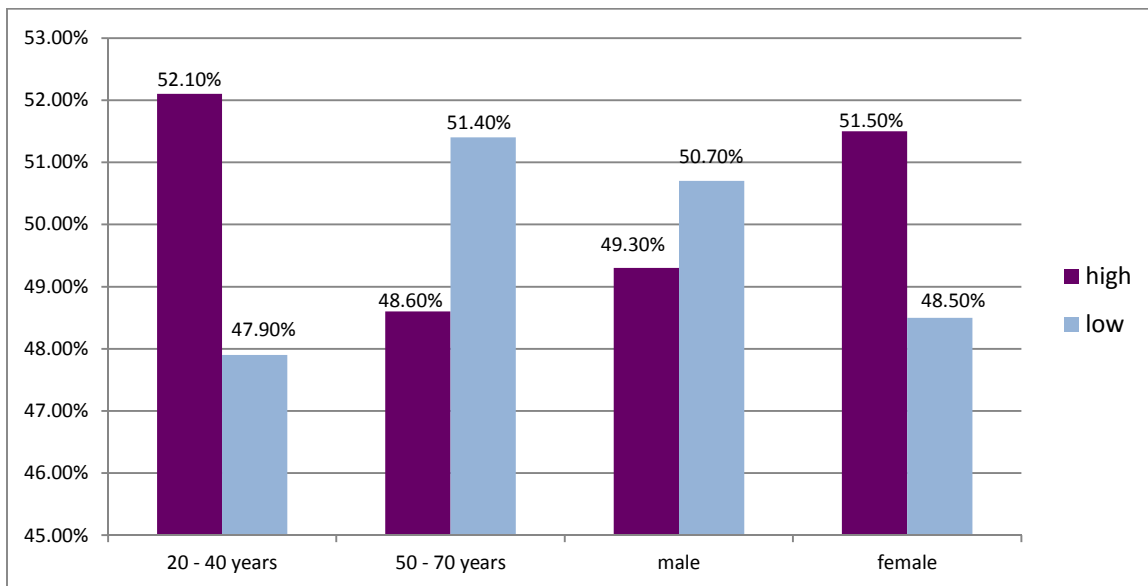


Figure 3: levels of subjective well-being

Socio-demographic characteristics

All the participants under study were Christians. Regarding their church denomination, the highest proportion of the participants (86.2%) were Presbyterian, 2.4% were Baptists, 4.6% belonged to the United Pentecostal Church, 2.4% were Catholics, 2% belonged to the Salvation Army, and 2% belonged to other denominations, while one person in the study was not members of any church.

Table 2a: Kruskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA on MVS for Marital Status and Church Activity

| Grouping variable | | Mean Rank | χ^2 | df | Sig |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----|------|
| Marital status | Single | 230.97 | 12.74 | 3 | .005 |
| | Married | 231.88 | | | |
| | Divorced | 189.76 | | | |
| | widowed | 242.97 | | | |
| Church activity | Never | 166.96 | 11.86 | 3 | .008 |
| | Sometimes | 220.54 | | | |
| | Often | 239.86 | | | |
| | Always | 235.82 | | | |

Table 2b: Steel–Dwass test on Marital Status

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 243.29 | 214.57 | 292.39 | 209.61 |
| Single | X | 2.19 | -1.90 | 1.04 |
| Married | 0.09 | X | -2.84* | 0.17 |
| Divorced | 0.18 | 0.02 | X | 1.87 |
| Widowed | 0.66 | 0.99 | 0.19 | X |

Table 2c: Steel-Dwass test on Church Activity

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 253.52 | 244.55 | 235.02 | 188.12 |
| Never | X | 0.30 | 0.75 | 1.93 |
| Sometimes | 0.99 | X | 0.62 | 3.21** |
| Often | 0.84 | 0.90 | X | 2.83* |
| Always | 0.18 | 0.01 | 0.02 | X |

Table 2d: Mann-Whitney U Table on MVS for church responsibility

| | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|
| | Yes | no |
| Mean Rank | 210.85 | 252.51 |
| Sum Rank | 53346 | 51765 |
| Mann-Whitney U | 21215 | |
| Wilcoxon W | 53346 | |
| Z | -3.357 | |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | |

Comparing differences in Materialism based on Socio-demographic variables

Mean rank differences in MVS have been analyzed based on the socio-demographic variable, using Kruskal Wallis test, and the results are shown in Table 2a. Analysis revealed significant differences on MVS on the basis of marital status and levels of involvement in church activity. Further analysis using Steel-Dwass test (Table2b) revealed that subjects who are married are significantly lower on materialism than those who are divorced. Multiple comparison of mean ranks (Table2c) between the four categories of church activity revealed that those who are ‘always’ actively involved in church activity are higher in materialism than those who are ‘sometimes’ and ‘often’ involved in church activity.

Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine difference on MVS on the basis of ‘church responsibility’. The results given in Table 2d indicated significant difference on MVS between those having church responsibility (Mean Rank = 210.85) and those without church responsibility (Mean Rank = 252.51) in which the former are significantly lower in materialism.

Table 3a: Kruskal-Wallis table on RCI for Marital Status, Educational Qualification, Sunday Church attendance and Church activity.

| Grouping variable | | Mean Rank | χ^2 | df | Sig |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----|------|
| Marital status | Single | 198.38 | 17.25 | 3 | .001 |
| | Married | 246.55 | | | |
| | Divorced | 227.56 | | | |
| | Widowed | 290.83 | | | |
| Educational Qualification | ≥ Graduate | 210.50 | 31.96 | 5 | .000 |
| | HSSLC | 198.54 | | | |
| | HSLC | 247.11 | | | |
| | Middle level | 278.78 | | | |
| | Primary level | 332.38 | | | |
| Uneducated | 248.38 | | | | |
| Sunday Church attendance | Never | 182.75 | 33.37 | 3 | .000 |
| | Sometimes | 150.09 | | | |
| | Often | 206.08 | | | |
| | Always | 257.14 | | | |
| Church activity | Never | 116.42 | 64.77 | 3 | .000 |
| | Sometimes | 178.64 | | | |
| | Often | 246.33 | | | |
| | Always | 297.06 | | | |

Table 3b: Steel-Dwass test on Marital Status

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 198.38 | 246.55 | 227.55 | 290.83 |
| Single | X | 3.63 ** | 1.14 | 2.75 * |
| Married | 0.00 | X | 0.74 | 1.39 |
| Divorced | 0.59 | 0.83 | X | 1.73 |
| Widowed | 0.02 | 0.43 | 0.25 | X |

Table 3c: Steel-Dwass test on Educational Qualification

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|----------|--------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 210.50 | 198.54 | 247.11 | 278.78 | 332.38 | 248.37 |
| ≥ Graduate | X | 0.79 | -2.31 | -2.94 * | -4.46*** | -0.54 |
| HSSLC | 0.88 | X | -2.66 | -3.04* | -4.28*** | -0.58 |
| HSLC | 0.12 | 0.05 | X | -1.27 | -3.05* | -0.08 |
| Middle Level | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.62 | X | -1.75 | 0.37 |
| Primary Level | 7.61 | 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.34 | X | 0.82 |
| Uneducated | 0.97 | 0.96 | 0.99 | 0.99 | 0.87 | X |

Table 3d: Steel-Dwass test on Church activity

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|----------|----------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 116.42 | 178.64 | 246.33 | 297.06 |
| Never | X | -2.63* | -4.51*** | -5.29*** |
| Sometimes | 0.03 | X | -4.83*** | -6.46*** |
| Often | 3.38 | 7.15 | X | -3.29** |
| Always | 7.46 | 2.57 | 0.00 | X |

Table 3e: Steel-Dwass test on Sunday Church attendance

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 186.64 | 155.05 | 201.39 | 252.14 |
| Never | X | 0.28 | -0.35 | -1.23 |
| Sometimes | 0.98 | X | -2.36 | -4.30*** |
| Often | 0.97 | 0.06 | X | -3.81*** |
| Always | 0.49 | 6.95 | 0.00 | X |

Table 3f: Mann-Whitney U Table Church responsibility on RCI

| | | |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| | yes | no |
| Mean Rank | 272.55 | 176.37 |
| Sum Rank | 68954.50 | 36156.50 |
| Mann-Whitney U | 15041.50 | |
| Wilcoxon W | 36156.50 | |
| Z | -7.739 | |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |

Comparing differences in religiosity based on Socio-demographic variables

Demographic variables on RCI were analyzed using the Kruskal-Wallis test and results shown in Table 3a. As can be seen from the table, significant differences of mean ranks are seen in all four demographic variables (marital status, educational qualification, Church activity and Sunday church attendance).

Further analysis of Steel-Dwass test (Table 3b, Table3c) revealed that those who are single are significantly higher on religious commitment than widow and those who are married. Subjects with primary level of education were the highest in religious commitment; subjects with middle level of education are more religious than those with an educational level of higher secondary education and graduate.

Steel-Dwass test of church activity and Sunday church attendance on RCI (Table 3d, Table 3e) revealed that with greater participation in church activity, higher is their religious commitment. Subjects who are always actively involved in church activity are highest on religious commitment, followed by those who are often involved in church activity, again followed by those who are sometimes involved in church activity. Those who never participate in church activity are lowest on religious commitment. Those attending church service every Sunday are higher on religious commitment than those who often and sometimes attend Sunday church service.

Analysis of Mann-Whitney U test (Table 3f) revealed significant effect of 'church responsibility' on religiosity, with those having responsibility in the church (Mean Rank =272.55) scoring higher on religious commitment than those without responsibility (Mean Rank = 176.37).

Table 4a: Kruskal-Wallis table on SWLS

| Grouping Variable | | Mean Rank | χ^2 | df | Sig |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----|------|
| Educational Qualification | ≥ Graduate | 266.31 | 30.93 | 5 | .000 |
| | HSSLC | 231.56 | | | |
| | HSLC | 189.51 | | | |
| | Middle level | 193.07 | | | |
| | Primary level | 182.54 | | | |
| Uneducated | 191.50 | | | | |
| Monthly family income | <5000 | 241.62 | 34.91 | 4 | .000 |
| | 5000-15000 | 165.75 | | | |
| | 1500-30000 | 201.03 | | | |
| | 30000-50000 | 232.25 | | | |
| | >50000 | 269.04 | | | |

Table 4b: Steel-Dwass test on Educational Qualification

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|-------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 266.31 | 231.56 | 189.51 | 193.07 | 182.54 | 191.5 |
| ≥ Graduate | X | 2.12 | 4.72*** | 3.23** | 3.06* | 0.98 |
| HSSLC | 0.18 | X | 2.28 | 1.53 | 1.68 | 0.69 |
| HSLC | 2.22 | 0.12 | X | -0.36 | 0.14 | 0.01 |
| Middle level | 0.01 | 0.46 | 0.99 | X | 0.46 | 0.15 |
| Primary level | 0.01 | 0.38 | 0.99 | 0.98 | X | 0.09 |
| Uneducated | 0.79 | 0.92 | 1 | 0.99 | 0.99 | X |

Table 4c: Dwass test on monthly family income

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 242.27 | 158.84 | 184.27 | 216.79 | 256.36 |
| <5000 | X | 2.24 | 1.51 | 0.67 | -0.50 |
| 5000-15000 | 0.12 | X | -1.38 | -2.93* | -5.03*** |
| 15000-30000 | 0.45 | 0.53 | X | -1.85 | -4.42*** |
| 30000-50000 | 0.92 | 0.02 | 0.27 | X | -2.58 |
| >50000 | 0.97 | 4.05 | 7.38 | 0.05 | X |

Table 4d: Mann-Whitney U test on Health Problem

| | yes | no |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Mean Rank | 206.53 | 241.95 |
| Sum Rank | 33251.50 | 71859.50 |
| Mann-Whitney U | 20210.50 | |
| Wilcoxon W | 33251.50 | |
| Z | -2.74 | |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .006 | |

Comparing differences in SWLS based on Socio-demographic variables

Demographic variables on SWLS are analyzed using the Kruskal Wallis test and results shown in Table 4a. Analysis of differences between educational qualifications and between family monthly incomes revealed significant differences on MVS.

Steel-Dwass test (Table 4b, Table 4c, Table 4d) revealed that subjects who have graduated have higher subjective well-being than those with high school, middle school and primary school level of education. With regards to occupation, government servants are higher in SWB than business man. Those with monthly income of above 50000 have higher SWB as compared to those with monthly income range of 5000 – 15000 and 15000 – 30000.

Observation of Table 4e revealed that those having health problem (Mean Rank=206.53) are significantly lower on SWB than those without health problems (Mean Rank=241.95). Health problem thus have an impact on the state of subjective well-being.

Table 5: Pearson’s coefficient correlation between materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being

| | MVS | RCI | SWLS |
|------|------------|------------|-------------|
| MVS | 1 | -.125** | -.141** |
| RCI | -.141** | 1 | .081 |
| SWLS | -.125** | .081 | 1 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation between Materialism and Religiosity

The relationship between materialism and religiosity was analyzed using Pearson's coefficient of correlation. Observation of Table 5 highlights that there is a significant negative correlation between MVS and RCI (-.125**, $p < .01$) which supports the hypothesis. However the variation in religious commitment is not largely explained by materialism and vice versa ($r^2 = .01$). Thus, there is a low negative correlation between materialism and subjective well-being. The lower p value may be due to large sample size.

This finding is consistent with that of other studies in different parts of the world where materialism has been found to be significantly and negatively associated with religious commitment (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; LaBarbera & Gu'rhan, 1997), with the explanation commonly offered that material objects are viewed as obstacles to spiritual transcendence (Kavanaugh, 1991; Smith, 1991; Zimmer, 1993).

Correlation between Materialism and Subjective well-being

In order to assess the relationship between Material Value Scale and Satisfaction With Life Scale, correlation analysis was conducted. Table 3 highlights a significant negative low correlation between materialism and subjective well-being (-.141, $p < 0.01$). Low correlation coefficient indicated that the relationship between the two variables is weak. The coefficient of determination was .02, so materialism explained only 2% of variation in subjective well-being and vice versa. The lower p value may be due to large sample size.

The negative relationship is consistent with that of other studies where materialism has been found to be significantly and negatively associated with subjective well-being. (Kasser et al, 2014). Many studies have shown a negative correlation between materialism and life satisfaction (Belk, 1985; Richins, 1987; Richins & Dawson, 1992; Georgellis et al, 2009). Since materially focused people place possession and acquisition at the center of their lives, dissatisfaction with their material domain likely spills over to their lives in general

(Sirgy, 1998). These scholars propose that materially oriented people may be continually dissatisfied with their lives since their material goals constantly outpace them.

Correlation between Religiosity and Subjective well-being

From Table 3 it is evident that there is no significant correlation between RCI and SWB. Several studies in different parts of the world indicated that subjective well-being has been found to be significantly and positively associated with religious commitment. (Soydemir, et al, 2004; Gruber, 2005; Lelkes, 2006; Jehad Alaedein-Zawzawi, 2015). In this sample there is no significant relationship between religiosity and SWB.

Table 6: Mann-Whitney U test- Comparing age difference in materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being

| | Age | Mean Rank | Sum of Rank | Mann-Whitney U | Wilcoxon W | Z | Sig (2-tailed) |
|------|---------|-----------|-------------|----------------|------------|-------|----------------|
| MVS | 20 – 40 | 240.63 | 57752.00 | 23488.00 | 47359.00 | -1.89 | .05 |
| | 50 - 70 | 217.24 | 47359.00 | | | | |
| RCI | 20 – 40 | 189.24 | 45416.50 | 16496.50 | 45416.50 | -6.84 | .00 |
| | 50 - 70 | 273.83 | 59694.50 | | | | |
| SWLS | 20 – 40 | 229.90 | 55175.50 | 26064.50 | 49935.50 | -.07 | .95 |
| | 50 - 70 | 229.06 | 49935.50 | | | | |

Comparison of age differences on Materialism

Age difference in MVS was analyzed using Mann-Whitney U and the results shown in Table 6. Significant age differences on MVS was observed, with age group 20-40 (younger adult) (Mean Rank=240.63) scoring more than the age group 50-70 (older adult) (Mean Rank=217.24).

This finding is consistent with that of other studies where materialism vary along with age (Flouri, 2001; Chaplin & John, 2007). Based on scientific and empirical research conducted in different cultural settings, and sample populations, age appears to diminish people’s materialism (Brouskeli & Loumakou, 2014). Generally speaking, older people care less about material possessions and feel happier than younger people. The result shows that

age indeed has an effect on peoples' materialism, when people grow old they attach less importance to material possessions than other things (for example, Chaplin & John, 2007).

Comparison of age differences on Religiosity

Age difference in Religious Commitment was analyzed using Mann-Whitney U and the result shown in Table 6. Significant age differences on RCI was observed, with older adults age group 50-70 years (Mean Rank=273.83) scoring more than younger adult age group 20-40 years (Mean Rank=189.24) on RCI.

This finding is consistent with other studies which indicate that people become more religious as they grow older (Wink & Dillon, 2001). It is a general believe as well as proved through research that as people grow older they become more religious.

Comparison of age differences on Subjective well-being

Mann-Whitney U was used to analyze age differences in SWB and the results shown in Table 6. Non-significant age differences on SWLS was observed, with age group 20-40 (Mean Rank=229.90) scoring more or less the same on SWLS as age group 50-70 (Mean Rank=229.06).

This finding is consistent with that of other studies where the mean level of life satisfaction exhibit almost no change and is stable from age 18 to 90 (Diener & Suh,1998) Using a series of studies conducted in the 1980s, Inglehart (1990) replicated the findings noting only small differences in life satisfaction across age groups. This finding shows that the subjective well-being does not vary in relation to age. Age does not seem to have an effect on SWB in the study population.

Table 7: Mann-Whitney U test - Comparing gender differences on materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being in each age group.

| Grouping variable | Age | Gender | Mean Rank | Sum of Rank | Mann-Whitney U | Wilcoxon W | Z | Sig. |
|-------------------|-------|--------|-----------|-------------|----------------|------------|--------|------|
| MVS | 20-40 | Male | 124.50 | 14566.50 | 6727.500 | 14353.500 | -.873 | .383 |
| | | female | 116.70 | 14353.50 | | | | |
| | 50-70 | Male | 112.84 | 12186.50 | 5579.500 | 11684.500 | -.776 | .438 |
| | | female | 106.22 | 11684.50 | | | | |
| RCI | 20-40 | Male | 109.22 | 12779.00 | 5876.000 | 12779.000 | -2.457 | .014 |
| | | female | 131.23 | 16141.00 | | | | |
| | 50-70 | Male | 97.08 | 10484.50 | 4598.500 | 10484.50 | -2.88 | .004 |
| | | female | 121.70 | 13386.50 | | | | |
| SWLS | 20-40 | Male | 115.19 | 13477.50 | 6574.500 | 13477.50 | -1.157 | .247 |
| | | female | 125.55 | 15442.50 | | | | |
| | 50-70 | Male | 109.85 | 11864.00 | 5902.00 | 12007.50 | -0.82 | .935 |
| | | female | 109.15 | 12007.00 | | | | |

Comparison of gender differences on Materialism

Gender difference in MVS was analyzed using Mann-Whitney U and the results are given in Table 7. Non - significant gender differences on MVS was observed. In the age group (20-40) years with male (Mean Rank=124.50) scoring more than female (Mean Rank=116.70). The same was observed in the age group (50-70) years with male (Mean Rank=112.84) scoring a little more than female (Mean Rank=106.22).

This finding is consistent with that of other studies where Sahdev & Gautam (2007) suggest that there is little difference between the materialistic values of Indian males and females, women compared with men ($p < 0.001$) were found to be more materialistic. Hélène Cherrier et al., (2009) in their study found no gender difference when it comes to materialism. Gender does not play a role in determining ones level of materialism in the study population.

Comparison of gender differences on Religiosity

Gender difference in RCI was analyzed in the two age groups i.e., (20-40) years and (50-70) years using Mann-Whitney U and the results are given in Table 7. Significant gender differences on RCI was observed in the age group (20-40) years with female (Mean

rank=131.23) scoring more than male (Mean Rank=109.22). The same trend was observed in the age group 50 – 70 years, with female (Mean Rank=121.70) significantly higher than male (Mean Rank=97.08) in religiosity.

Gender differences are usually found in religiosity (Brown & Gary,1990; Utsey & Bolden, 2000). Research findings have consistently demonstrated that females are more religious than males and are more likely to express greater interest in religion and have a stronger personal religious commitment Argyle & Beit-Hallahmi (1975).

Comparison of gender differences on Subjective Well-being

Gender difference in SWB was analyzed in the two age groups i.e., (20-40) years and (50-70) years using Mann-Whitney U and the results are given in Table 7. Non - significant gender differences on SWB was observed in the age group (20-40) years with female (Mean Rank=125.55) scoring a little more than male (Mean Rank=115.19). The same was observed in the age group (50-70) years with male (Mean Rank=109.89) scoring more or less the same as female (Mean Rank=109.19). Haring, et al. (1984) reported that men have slight higher tendency to report higher levels of positive well-being whereas Wood, et al. (1999) reported a slight benefit for women (particularly in measures of happiness and life satisfaction). Several classic studies found no difference in reported happiness between men and women (e.g., Bradburn, 1969; Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965; Gurin, Veroff, & Feld, 1960). This result finds support from the report of Lucas and Gohm (2000) where women report similar levels of pleasant and life satisfaction as men. This finding shows that gender does not play a role in determining subjective well-being in the study population.

Table 8a: Kruskal-Wallis on materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being for age and sex.

| Grouping variable | | Mean Rank | χ^2 | df | Sig |
|-------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|----|-----|
| MVS | Male 20 – 40 years | 248.41 | 5.09 | 3 | .16 |
| | Male 50 – 70 years | 224.91 | | | |
| | Female 20 – 40 years | 233.24 | | | |
| | Female 50 – 70 years | 209.71 | | | |
| RCI | Male 20 – 40 years | 170.56 | 60.84 | 3 | .00 |
| | Male 50 – 70 years | 245.91 | | | |
| | Female 20 – 40 years | 207.00 | | | |
| | Female 50 – 70 years | 301.24 | | | |
| SWLS | Male 20 – 40 years | 219.50 | 1.43 | 3 | .69 |
| | Male 50 – 70 years | 230.03 | | | |
| | Female 20 – 40 years | 239.79 | | | |
| | Female 50 – 70 years | 228.11 | | | |

Table 8b: Steel-Dwass test in RCI

| | | | | |
|----------------------|--------|----------|--------|----------|
| Group/Mean Rank | 170.56 | 245.91 | 207.00 | 301.24 |
| 20 – 40 years Male | X | -4.05*** | -2.46 | -7.29*** |
| 50 – 70 years Male | 0.00 | X | 2.25 | -2.88* |
| 20 – 40 years Female | 0.07 | 0.11 | X | -5.75*** |
| 50 – 70 years Female | 2.63 | 0.02 | 3.16 | X |

Mean rank differences are analyzed based on gender and age on MVS, RCI and SWLS and the results shown in Table 8a, which revealed that there is a significant differences in religiosity on the basis of gender x age. Further analysis on RCI using Steel-Dwass test (table 8b) revealed that 50 – 70 years female are significantly higher in religiosity than all the other groups (20 – 40 years male, 20 – 40 years female, 50 – 70 years male) and 50 – 70 years males are significantly higher in religiosity than 20 – 40 years male.

CHAPTER – V

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

Materialism and religiosity play an important role in the life of a person influencing thinking, moral and action, and importantly subjective well-being. Throughout history materialism is condemned and believed as well as proved to have a negative impact on an individual as well as societal level. Religiosity on the other hand is said to promote well-being by acting as a buffer from the negativity of life and subjective well-being of a person is to some extent determined by religiosity and materialism.

The main concern of the present study was to compare younger and older Mizo adult on materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being. In order to fulfill the purpose of the research the following psychological tools were employed: i) Material Value Scale, ii) Religious Commitment Inventory and iii) Satisfaction with Life Scale.

Given the theoretical pinning and empirical background of materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being the present study works with the following objectives to explore the level of materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being, to explore relationships between these three variables and to highlight gender and age differences if any. Thus this study has a hypotheses of correlation between materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being and to highlight age differences on the behavioral constructs as well as gender differences within each age group. Pearson's correlation was used to highlight the relations between the variables, and Kruskal-Wallis was used to highlight age and gender differences if any among the samples.

Samples were randomly selected from four zones of Aizawl city to ensure representativeness. The analysis using median split showed nearly sixty percent of younger adult are high in materialism, about seventy percent are high in religiosity, and a little more than fifty percent are high in SWB. For the older sample about forty eight percent are high in materialism, about sixty eight percent are high in religiosity and about forty three percent are

high in SWB. Results of MVS, RCI and SWLS revealed that the total coefficient of correlation of the subjects emerged to be satisfactory over the levels of analysis for the whole sample, indicating the trust-worthiness of the scales.

Hypothesis 1

It was hypothesized that there would be a significant negative relationship between materialism and subjective well-being in line with literatures that shown that people draw upon possession and acquisition of material goods to counterbalance the deficiencies of their life (Williams et al., 2000; Kasser et al., 1995 and Moore and Moschis, 1981). Results reveal that there is a significant negative relationship between materialism and subjective well-being, thus supporting the hypothesis. This finding is consistent with studies conducted by several researchers (e.g., Christopher et al. 2007;Georgellis et al. 2009; Kasser et. al 2014) as well as theories predicting negative correlation between materialism and subjective well-being (e.g., telic and judgement theories).

Hypothesis 2

It was hypothesized that there would be a significant positive relationship between religious commitment and subjective well-being. Analysis was conducted using Pearson's correlation. Results revealed that there is no significant correlation between RCI and SWLS. Thus hypothesis 2 was not supported. Virtually most researches on relationship between religiosity and subjective well-being show that there is a relationship between the two generally a positive one (e.g., Soydemir, et al., 2004; Gruber, 2005; Lelkes,2006; JihadAlaedein-Zawzawi, 2015). This study also shows a trend of positive relationship between religiosity and subjective well-being although not significant.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 predicted a significant negative relationship between religious commitment and materialism. To examine this Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted and result revealed a significant positive relationship which is in contrast with the hypothesis. This finding is inconsistent with that of other studies in different parts of the world where materialism has been found to be significantly and negatively associated with religious commitment (Burroughs and Rindfleisch,2002; ; LaBarbera and Gu`rhan1997).

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 predicted that there would be significant differences on the behavioral constructs between the two age groups. To examine this, Mann-Whitney U test was conducted for the three behavioral constructs.

Result revealed that there is a significant difference between the two age groups on materialism, thus supporting the hypothesis. This finding is consistent with that of other studies where materialism vary along with age (Flouri,2001; Chaplin and John,2007). This study shows that young adult (20-40 years) are more materialistic than older adult (50 – 70 years)(Brouskeli and Loumakou, 2014).

Result revealed that there is a significant age differences on religiosity or religious commitment thus proving the hypothesis. This study shows that older adults are more religious than younger adult. It is a general believe as well as proved through research that as people grow older they become more religious (Wink and Dillon, 2001).

In SWLS non-significant age differences was observed, revealing that young and older adults were more or less the same in their SWB so we refute the proposed hypothesis. This finding is consistent with other studies where the mean level of life satisfaction shows almost no change and is stable from age 18 to 90. (Diener and Suh,1998).

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 expected a significant gender differences on the behavioral constructs under study for each of the age group. To examine this, Mann-Whitney U - test was conducted for the three behavioral constructs in each age group.

Non-significant gender difference was observed on materialism in both the age group which is in contrast with the hypothesis. Males and females are more or less the same on MVS. This finding is the same as that of Cherrier et al (2009) reporting no gender difference when it comes to materialism. Gender did not play a direct role at least in materialism in the study population.

Non- significant gender difference was observed on SWB in both the age group again refuting the proposed hypothesis. The finding is in line with the reports of Lucas and Gohm (2000) where women report similar levels of pleasant and life satisfaction as men. There are findings that support both male and female to have better SWB (Haring, Stock and Okun, 1984; Wood, Rhodes and Wheelan, 1989). However this study shows that gender do not play a role at least directly on one's SWB.

In case of religious commitment, there is a significant gender difference in both the age group supporting the hypothesis. Result revealed that female score higher on RCI than male. Studies on religion have constantly demonstrated that females are more religious than

males and are more likely to express greater interest in religion (Yinger, J.M., 1970) and have a stronger personal religious commitment (Argyle, M., and Beit-Hallahmi, 1975).

Hypothesis 6

Finally, the socio-demographic data of the sample presented an insight into the relationship of demographic variables with materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being. Demographic variables were analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney U. Steel-Dwass test was used for multiple comparisons of the demographic variables.

Of the socio-demographic variables, materialism was found to differ significantly on marital status and levels of participation and responsibilities within the church. Those who are divorced are significantly higher on materialism than those who are married. Those having responsibility in the church have lower materialism than those without responsibility in the church. The higher the level of participation in church activities the higher is the level of materialism.

Religiosity was found to differ significantly on marital status, educational qualification, levels of participation and responsibilities in the church as well as Sunday church attendance. Widow and divorcee were lower in religious commitment compared to those who are single. Lower the educational qualification higher is the level of religious commitment; those with primary level of education were highest in religiosity followed by middle school level of education. Graduate or above have the lowest level of religious commitment. Higher the level of participation in church activities and Sunday church attendance higher is the level of religious commitment. Those holding responsibilities in the church are more religiously committed compared to those without any responsibilities.

Socio demographic variables such as educational qualification, monthly income and health status have significant effect on subjective well-being. Higher the level of educational qualification the more satisfied they are with life. Graduate or above were more satisfied with life compared to those with primary, middle and high school level of education. Those without health problem are more satisfied with their life compare to those with certain health problems.

Majority of Mizo Christian are Protestants and build upon Calvinistic doctrine. All the participants under study were Christians and regarding their church denomination, the highest proportion of the participants (86.2%) were Presbyterian, 2.4% were Baptists, while 4.6% belonged to the United Pentecostal Church, 2.4% were Catholics, 2% belonged to the Salvation Army, and 2% belonged to other denominations, while one person in the study was not members of any church. According to the the Protestant Work Ethic favors individuals who are industrious and religiously zealous and wealth is the truest expression of having received God's love (Cherrington, 1980; Oates, 1971). With Protestant morals regarding increased earnings and savings, some wealthy individuals chose to display material possessions as a signifier to others that they were predestined to ascend to heaven (Cherrington, 1980; Oates, 1971). The results of the analysis of RCI presents an insight of the extent of influence the protestant doctrine has on the sample under study and may provide basis for further in-depth study on this aspect. Further, it is noteworthy to report that with regards to educational qualification, more religious commitment was seen in those with primary and middle education.

In conclusion of the overall results of analysis incorporated in the present study age has an effect on materialism with younger adult more materialistic than older adult. The reverse was found in terms of religiosity with older adults more religious than younger adults.

Thus, materialism and religiosity vary along age. Gender on the other hand has a significant effect only on religiosity with female scoring more than male in both the age group (younger adult and older adult). Thus, females are more religious than male and older adult females are the most religious group in this study. The result of this study also revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between materialism and subjective well-being as well as between materialism and religious commitment as expected. Socio demographic variables such as marital status, levels of participation and responsibility in church have significant effect on materialism. Religiosity was found to differ significantly on marital status, educational qualification, church activity and Sunday church attendance. Of the socio demographic variables, subjective well-being was found to differ significantly on educational qualification, family monthly income and health conditions.

The present study being the first in the population under study has methodological and technical challenges which may imply a further more in depth study of the research topic to present a more comprehensive research finding. Also, for intervention strategies to be suggested and developed with regards to the variables of the study if deemed necessary.

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APPENDICES

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE OF MIZORAM AND THE LIFE OF ITS INHABITANTS, THE MIZOS

Mizoram is a small north-eastern state in India with Aizawl as its capital city. It shares borders with three of the “eight-sister” states, namely Tripura, Assam and Manipur. The state also shares a 722 kilometer border with the neighboring countries of Bangladesh and Myanmar. The name ‘Mizoram’ has been derived from Mi (people), Zo (Highland or Hills) and Ram (land), and thus Mizoram implies "land of the hill people".

Mizoram is the second least populous state in the country. It has a population of 1,091,014 with 552,339 males and 538,675 females (2011 census). The majority of its inhabitants are Christians (87%). Its people belong to various denominations, mostly Presbyterian in its north and Baptists in south. The sex ratio of the state is 976 females per thousand males, higher than the national ratio of 940. The density of population is 52 persons per square kilometre. The literacy rate of Mizoram in 2011 was 91.33 per cent, higher than the national average 74.04 per cent, and second best among all the states of India. About 52% of Mizoram’s population lives in urban areas, much higher than India's average. Over one third of the population of Mizoram lives in Aizawl district, which hosts the capital.

The ancestors of the Mizos were anthropologically identified as members of the Tibeto-Burman ethnicity. They worshipped all sorts of objects and natural phenomena. The Mizos came under the influence of the British missionaries in the ninth century, and they converted from Animist religions to Christianity over the first half of 20th century, now most of the Mizos are Christians. They have been enchanted to their faith in Christianity with so much dedication that their entire social life and thought-process has been transformed and guided by the Christian church and their sense of values has also undergone drastic change. Their perception of what is right or wrong is based on Christian beliefs, as is their judgment

of what is moral and immoral. Christianity has turned into a new culture and ethnic identity, reflected in their behavior towards those in their community.

Mizos are fast giving up their old customs and adopting the new mode of life which is greatly influenced by the western culture. Many of their present customs are mixtures of their old tradition and a western pattern of life. Contemporary people of Mizoram celebrate Christmas, Easter and other Christian festivals replacing many of old tribal customs and practices. However, the Mizo society is still a close-knit one, with no class distinction and no discrimination on grounds of gender. The entire society is knitted together by a peculiar code of ethics, 'Tlawmngaihna' an untranslatable term meaning on the part of everyone to be hospitable, kind, unselfish and helpful to others. Tlawmngaihna as a cultural concept incorporates behavior that is self-sacrificing, self-denying, doing what an occasion demands unselfishly and without concern for inconvenience caused.

With the attainment of statehood in 1986, modern Mizoram is heading to progress and prosperity. With international borders with Bangladesh and Myanmar, it is an important port state for southeast Asian imports to India, as well as exports from India. Mizoram is a growing transit point for trade with Myanmar and Bangladesh. The state's gross state domestic product (GSDP) growth rate was nearly 10% annually over 2001-2013 period. However, as like any other community, with increasing population burden and the modern ways of life no doubt, the Mizo society also faces great challenges, with a large number of Mizo youths being faced with drug and alcohol abuse.

DEMOGRAPHI PROFILE

Hengzawhnatehi mimal nun chhuinatur a nilova, M.Phil research atanatih a ni a, mimalchhannate hi confidential (uluk taka vawninmidangtehriatturapektur ani lo)vekniiin research atanchauhahmantur ani a. Hmingpawhziadhan a ngailemlova, khawgaihtakin min lo chhansakve ta che.

Hetiengzawhnachhanlaihianmahni \ha
 tihanglehthilmawihawihzawngchungachhan a awl \hin a.
 Chutiangnilovinrilruinhawngtakleh, mahninihnadiktakmilinichhanghram dawn nia.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

1. pa Hmeichhia
2. Kum: _____
3. pui/Pasalneilo NupuPasalnei Inth Kawppui s tawh
4. Tuna awmnakhua/veng: _____
5. Piannakhua: _____
6. Lehkathlen chin:
 - a) aduate (B.A./B.Sc./B.Com etc.) leh a chung lam
 - b) gher Secondary School
 - c) atric/High School
 - d) iddle School
 - e) mary School
 - f) hkhazir lo
7. Hnathawh: a) Sawrkarhnab) Surawng c) Inhwhfad) Zirlai
 e) Hnaneilo/Engmahthawk lo f) Aangte
8. Thlakhatailakluhzat: a) Iut lo b) 50 hnuai lam c) 00 – 15000 d)
 15000 – 30000 e) 30000 – 500 f) 50000 chungm

9. Nu leh Pa dinmun: a) Inneilaib) I hen c) Nu/Pa boraltawh
d) Boral vevetawhe) hei lo
10. Pa hnathawh: a) Sawrkarhna b) Sumdawng c) Inhlawhfa
d) Hnanei Engmahthawk lo e) Ada te
11. Nu hnathawh: a) Sawrkarhna b) Sumdawng c) Inhlawhfa
d) Hnanei Engmahthawk lo e) Adangte
12. Chhungkawchawmtuber: a) Mahni b) Nupui/Pasal c) Midang
13. Chhungkuaathawkchhuaktuzawngzawngzat: _____ Chhungkawcheng ho zat: _____
14. Thlakhatachungkaw sum lakluhzawngzawngbelhkhawmin:
a) 000 hnuai lam d) 30000 – 50000
b) 000 – 15000 e) 5000 chunglam
c) 15000 – 30000
15. Chhungkawawmdan:
a) Nuclear Family (Mahnichhungkawbik – nu, pa lehnau ten nenchauhaawm)
b) Joint Family (mahnichhungkawbik leh pi, pu, ni, pateateetcnenaawm)
16. a) Unaupianpuizat: _____ b) In unauzingah a engzatnangeinih: _____
17. Tungeenkawlseilianche: a) Nu leh Pa b) Nu auhc) Pa chat
d) Pi leh Pu e) Chhungte dang f) Adangte
18. Chenna in: a) Mahni in b) Mi i luah

19. Kohhranlawina: a) Presbyterian b) Baptist c) Adventist d) UPC e) Salvation Army f) Catholic g) Kohhranlawinaneilo h) A d gte
20. Kohhran ah chanvoineiem: a) Nei b) Neilo
21. Kohhranthiltihainhmandan: a) el Ngailo b) Tel vezeuhzeuh
c) Tel vefomai d) Tel ziah
22. I nopanlain Sunday sikulikalngaiem: a) lngailob) Kalzeuhzeuh
c) Kalvefomai d) Kalziah
23. Pathianni/Sabbath inkhomdan: a) Inkhawmngailo
b) Inkhawmvezeuhzeuhc) Inkhawmvefomai d) Inkhawmziah
24. Khawtlangahchanvoineiem: a) Nei b) Neilo
25. Khawtlangthiltihainhmandan: a) el Ngailo b) Tel vezeuhzeuh
c) Tel vefomai d) Tel ziah
26. Natnabenvawnemawtaksahrisellohbikriaunaineiem: a) Nei b) Neilo
27. Chhungkawthiltihkhawmna ah ikal thin em: a) Ngailo
b) vezeuhzeuh c) vefomai d) Kalziah
28. Karkhatahthiantenenengtianga tam nge in inkawm: a) lehaaiatlem
b) 3 5 c) Nitin

MATERIAL VALUES SCALE (Marsha, L. Richins, 2004)***ATTITUDE SCALE***

Indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling the answer that best represents your feelings.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|--|----------------------|
| Strongly Agree | | | | | Strongly Disagree |
| | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | | |
| SA | A | N | D | | SD |

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. | I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 2. | I like a lot of luxury in my life. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 3. | I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 4. | Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 5. | The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 6. | I have all the things I really need to enjoy life. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 7. | I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 8. | My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 9. | I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 10. | The things I own aren't all that important to me. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 11. | It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 12. | Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 13. | I like to own things that impress people. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 14. | I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 15. | I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

THE RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT INVENTORY-10

(Worthington, E. L., Jr., et al, 2012)

RCI-10

Instructions: Read each of the following statements. Using the scale to the right, CIRCLE the response that best describes how true each statement is for you.

| Not at all | Somewhat | Moderately | Mostly | Totally | | | | | |
|------------|---|------------|------------|------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| true of me | true of me | true of me | true of me | true of me | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | |
| 1. | I often read books and magazines about my faith. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | I make financial contributions to my religious organization. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | I spend time trying to grow in understanding of my faith. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | Religion is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | I enjoy spending time with others of my religious affiliation. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | Religious beliefs influence all my dealings in life. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | It is important to me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and reflection. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | I enjoy working in the activities of my religious affiliation. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | I keep well informed about my local religious group and have some influence in its decisions. | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE

(Diener, E., Emmons, et al, 1985)

Instructions: Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 7 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly agree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly disagree

_____ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

_____ The conditions of my life are excellent.

_____ I am satisfied with my life.

_____ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

_____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.



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| APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL | | |
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(Abstract)

**Materialism, Religiosity and Subjective Well-being
in Relation to Age**

Lalrintluangi

**Dissertation Submitted for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Psychology**

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

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2016

(Abstract)

Materialism, Religiosity and Subjective Well-being
in Relation to Age

Materialism and religiosity play an important role in the life of a person influencing thinking, moral and action, and importantly subjective well-being. Throughout history materialism is condemned and believed as well as proved to have a negative impact on an individual as well as societal level. Religiosity on the other hand is said to promote well-being by acting as a buffer from the negativity of life and subjective well-being of a person is to some extent determined by religiosity and materialism.

The present study endeavors to understand the effect of variation in age, to different behavioral constructs like materialism, religious commitment and subjective well being and to observe the relationship between the three constructs on the population under study. For this purpose, the present study was designed with the following objectives.

1. To explore the level of materialism in the two age groups.
2. To explore the degree of religiosity in the two age groups.
3. To explore the level of subjective well being in the two age groups.
4. To explore the relationship between materialism, religious commitment and subjective well-being in the two age groups.
5. To highlight gender differences for each age group on the behavioral constructs of the study.
6. To examine the relationship between the behavioral constructs.
7. To highlight the role of socio-demographic variables.

Hypothesis:

1. It is expected that measures of level of materialism and subjective well-being will be significantly and negatively related.
2. It is expected that there will be a significant positive relationship between religious commitment and subjective well-being.
3. It is expected that there will be a significant negative relationship between religious commitment and levels of materialism.
4. It is expected that there will be a significant differences on the behavioral constructs between the two age groups.
5. It is expected that there will be a significant gender differences on the behavioral constructs for each of the age groups selected for the study.
6. It is expected that the socio demographic variables will play a role in explaining variation between age groups and between gender.

Four hundred and fifty eight (458) Mizo adults comprising of 225 males and 233 females, with the age range 20 – 40 years (240) and (50 – 70) years (218) served as a sample for this study. In order to ensure representativeness two localities each were randomly selected from the four zones of Aizawl city i.e., east, west, north and south. Thus the sample were randomly taken from 8 localities of Aizawl.

Median split method was used to distinguish the subjects as scoring low or high on the three behavioral constructs (materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being) measured. The socio-demographic background information of the subjects like age, gender, educational qualification, occupation, permanent residence, family structure etc will be recorded to match the subjects in order to maintain the homogeneity of the sample.

The study incorporated 2x2 factorial design (2 age group x 2 sex). The participants between 20-40 years of age (younger adult) and 50-70 years of age (older age) will be randomly selected from the four zones (i.e. East, West, North, South) of Aizawl and represent the participants on the age group (younger adult and older age) and two sex (male and female) shall represent the corresponding levels on the variables.

To meet the objectives of the present study, the following psychological measures were incorporated: Material Value Scale (Marsha L. Richins, 2004), Religious Commitment Inventory (Worthington et. al, 2012) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, 1985). Subjective well-being and life satisfaction, for the purpose of this study, will be used synonymously.

Demographic profile was framed by the researcher to tap important information about the participants. The administration of the psychological scales was conducted in a face to face interaction between the participants and the researcher in an optimal environmental setting. . After formation of a good rapport booklets containing measures of the variables were given to the subject containing the following scales: Material Value Scale (MVS) Religious Commitment Inventory (RCI) and Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS). The researcher took care to see that the respondents provided honest and independent answers to the questions presented. The anonymity, confidentiality and ethics as cited/formulated by APA, 2003 (American Psychiatric Association) was followed.

The data collected was processed with the help of computer and analyzed using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS). The psychometric adequacy of all the behavioral measures was checked and the data are then presented with descriptive statistics (Mean, SD and Reliability of the scale). Nonparametric statistics were used in the study, since the values for skewness and kurtosis of certain variables were not found to be

satisfactory for use of parametric statistics. Pearson's coefficient of correlation, Kruskal-Wallis and Steel-Dwass test were used to analyze the data.

The reliability and predictive validity of the scales were ascertained to ensure the psychometric adequacy of the scales used for the study. Internal consistency reliability was estimated for each of the scales used in the study using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. Inter-items correlation less than 0.2 were excluded (i.e., items 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 14 and 15) from Material Value Scale and the reliability was 0.73. The reliability of Religious Commitment Inventory was 0.85 and 0.76 for Satisfaction with Life Scale. Results revealed that the total coefficient of correlation of the subjects emerged to be satisfactory over the levels of analysis for the whole sample, indicating the trust-worthiness of the scales for measurement purposes in the Mizo population.

Socio-demographic information was also recorded for each sample to maintain the homogeneity of the sample and to observe the effect of demographic variables on the measured variables. Non-parametric test was employed to compare age differences on materialism, religious commitment and subjective well-being due to violation of assumptions for using a parametric test. Gender difference within each age group on the three behavioral constructs was also examined.

The bivariate relationship between the three constructs were computed and it indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between materialism and religious commitment as well as between subjective well-being and materialism.

A review of literature confirmed the findings indicating that materialism has been found to be significantly and negatively associated with religious commitment (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; LaBarbera & Gu'rhan ,1997), with the explanation commonly offered that material objects are viewed as obstacles to spiritual transcendence (Kavanaugh ,1991;

Smith, 1991; Zimmer, 1993). The negative relationship is consistent with that of other studies where materialism has been found to be significantly and negatively associated with subjective well-being. (Kasser et al, 2014). Since materially focused people place possession and acquisition at the center of their lives, dissatisfaction with their material domain likely spills over to their lives in general (Sirgy, 1998).

Tests of mean rank difference using Mann-Whitney U-test on age group result in a significant difference on materialism and religious commitment. Younger adults are more materialistic than older adults while older adults tend to be more compelled and committed to religion. There was a tied mean rank between younger and older adult on subjective well-being. Gender difference on the three scales was analyzed using Mann-Whitney U-test controlling for age. There was a significant gender difference observed only on religious commitment with female being more religious, be it young or old.

The results of the present study got supported of earlier studies as materialism and religiosity vary along with age (Flouri, 2001; Chaplin & John, 2007; Wink & Dillion, 2001). Age appears to diminish people's materialism (Brouskeli & Loumakou, 2014), when people grow old they attach less importance to material possessions than other things (for example, Chaplin & John, 2007). Similarly, people become more religious as they grow older (Wink & Dillon, 2001). Gender differences are usually found in religiosity (Brown & Gary,1990; Utsey & Bolden, 2000). Research findings have consistently demonstrated that females are more religious than males and are more likely to express greater interest in religion and have a stronger personal religious commitment Argyle & Beit-Hallahmi (1975).

Mean rank differences was analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis test based on gender and age on the three scales (MVS, RCI and SWLS) and resulted in a significant rank difference on religiosity. Further analysis on RCI using Steel-Dwass test revealed that older female

adults (50 – 70 years) are more religiously committed than all other groups i.e., older male adults (50 – 70 years); younger male adults (20 – 40 years); younger female adults (20 – 40 years). Older male adults are also more committed to religion than younger adults, with older male adult significantly higher in religious commitment than younger male adult.

The socio demographic data of the sample presented an insight into the relationship of demographic variables with materialism, religiosity and subjective well-being. Subjects who are married are lower on materialism than those who are divorced. There was a significant difference on materialism between those having church responsibility and those without church responsibility in which the former are significantly lower in materialism.

Commitment to church activities results in higher materialistic value. Subjects who are always actively involved in church activity are highest on religious commitment, followed by those who are often involved in church activity. Those who haven't married seem to be more religiously committed than those who are married or widowed. Levels of education also have a significant effect on religious commitment with lower levels of education being more committed to religion. Subjects who have graduated have higher subjective well-being than those with high school, middle school and primary school level of education. Monthly income also has effect on levels of well-being with higher monthly income indicating a more well-being state. Subjects having health problems are significantly lower on subjective well-being than those without health problems. Health problem thus have an impact on the state of subjective well-being.

Majority of Mizo Christian are Protestants and build upon Calvinistic doctrine. All the participants under study were Christians and regarding their church denomination, the highest proportion of the participants (86.2%) were Presbyterian, 2.4% were Baptists, while 4.6% belonged to the United Pentecostal Church, 2.4% were Catholics, 2% belonged to the

Salvation Army, and 2% belonged to other denominations, while one person in the study was not members of any church. According to the the Protestant Work Ethic favors individuals who are industrious and religiously zealous and wealth is the truest expression of having received God's love (Cherrington, 1980; Oates, 1971). With Protestant morals regarding increased earnings and savings, some wealthy individuals chose to display material possessions as a signifier to others that they were predestined to ascend to heaven (Cherrington, 1980; Oates, 1971). The results of the analysis of RCI presents an insight of the extent of influence the protestant doctrine has on the sample under study and may provide basis for further in depth study on this aspect. Further, it is noteworthy to report that with regards to educational qualification, more religious commitment was seen in those with primary and middle education.

Significance of the study: An extensive review of literature found no published articles focusing on the relationship between the mentioned behavioral constructs in Mizoram. It is therefore, felt necessary to explore these variables in Aizawl District. The overall consideration would not only help satisfy to achieve the theoretical and methodological considerations but would provide foundations for behavioral intervention programs and further extended studies

Limitation of the study: The present study being the first in the population under study has methodological and technical challenges which may imply a further more in depth study of the research topic to present a more comprehensive research finding. Also, for intervention strategies to be suggested and developed with regards to the variables of the study if deemed necessary.

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