

# Gender Differences in Quality of Life Among Research Students: A Comparative Study

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The quality of life of research students play a pivotal role in shaping their academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being. The Quality of Life (QoL) among research scholars in India is influenced by a complex interplay of academic, personal, and environmental factors. Research scholars often face significant challenges, including academic pressures, financial constraints, and limited work-life balance, which can adversely impact their physical and mental health.

**Aim:** The main purpose of this study was to determine the specific affected domains of quality of life among PhD students and to assess the gender difference in quality of life among research scholars.

**Materials and Methods:** This study was conducted at Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra used an exploratory research design with a quantitative approach. Data was collected via surveys over three months, through SF-36 questionnaire involving 200 research scholars (100 males and 100 females).

**Results:** The socio-demographic profile of the participants showed that they were aged 26-30 years, with more single males (88%) than females (68%). Dietary preferences show females (37%), following vegetarian diets, while males (56%) favour lacto-vegetarian options. Body Mass Index (BMI) data reveal equal underweight proportions

(8%), higher obesity in males (68%), and females (18%) with a normal BMI. The SF-36 health score data reveal gender differences across eight domains. Males score higher in physical health, general health, and physical functioning.

Females show more variability, particularly in emotional well-being, social functioning, pain, and energy, with wider distributions across performance levels. Males generally have better physical and functional health, while females experience more emotional and energy fluctuations. There were differences in mean scores between males and females across various health domains. Males scored higher in physical health (P-V 0.27NS) functioning (P-V 0.67NS), and pain (P-V 0.24NS), while females reported better emotional well-being (P-V 0.00s) and slightly higher energy levels (P-V 0.65NS). Overall, total mean scores were nearly identical, with minimal gender differences in health perception.

**Conclusion:** The study reveals that males tend to have better physical and functional health, with higher scores in physical health, functioning, and pain. Females, however, experience more emotional and energy fluctuations, scoring higher in emotional well-being. Despite these differences, the overall health perceptions between genders were similar, with minimal variance in total mean scores.

**Keywords:** SF-36, Mental health, Social wellbeing

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