



Global Conference on Psychology

17-19 May 2024 | Liverpool, United Kingdom

## **Hearing the Deaf: A Qualitative Exploration of Happiness, Well-being, Meaning in Life & Transcendence among Adults with Mild to Moderate Hearing Loss**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In India, a considerable percentage of the population is affected by mild to moderate degree of hearing loss, which can have an impact on multiple aspects of an individual's life. The existing literature on the deaf community and their psychosocial health has a dearth of knowledge on the sources of happiness and well-being in the lives of individuals living with hearing impairment, especially in the Indian context. The aim of the current study was to explore the Lived experiences of individuals with mild to moderate hearing impairment through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis; in order to identify the factors that play a role in ensuring the happiness and well-being of them along with those factors that add meaning in their lives and lead to transcendence. In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 individuals from Kolkata, India having mild to moderate hearing loss, between the age range of 30-45 years. The study shed light on how factors such as a respectable job, supportive family and friends are sources of the participants' happiness and well-being. Instances of how the deaf community often faces bullying and micro-aggressions in their day-to-day interactions with able-bodied individuals were also reported. The study also revealed how engaging in different art forms and striving for excellence in whatever they do add significant meaning to their lives. The study takes a positive paradigm to explore the factors that contribute most to their psychological well-being and happiness.

**Keywords:** Hearing-impairment, happiness, wellbeing, meaning in life, transcendence