



A Study of Happiness of Senior Citizens from Community and Non Community Living

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ABSTRACT : Rise in the share of elderly in total population of India possesses multiple challenges viz., improving their happiness through providing family support, medical assistance and social support, reducing their negative aspect of life. There is an increasing interest worldwide in the study of happiness as a means to assess and need to evaluate positive dimensions of health aspects of senior citizens. In a study on the happiness of senior citizens residing in community and non-community living, the objective was to see the difference in their happiness. A sample of 100 senior citizens was taken randomly from different areas in the city of Chennai, for non-community living and the sample for community living was taken from a senior citizen home. Out of the entire sample 50 were from community living and 50 from non-community living and out of them, 25 were males and 25 were females respectively for both the groups. Standardized tool used for the study was Happiness scale by Dr. Rastogi and Dr. Moorjani . Statistical analysis used was mean, SD and 't' test. The results revealed that there was a significant difference in the happiness of senior citizens living in community living and non-community living. There was also a significant difference between males and females in the different types of housing.

Keywords: Senior Citizens, Community and Non Community living, Happiness

INTRODUCTION: Old age comprises "the later part of life"; the period of life after youth and middle age, usually with reference to deterioration. Beginning of old age cannot be universally defined because it shifts according to the context. The United Nations has agreed that 60 years and above may be usually denoted as old age, and this is the first attempt at an international definition of old age. At the same time, the WHO recognized that the developing world often defines old age, not by years, but by new roles, loss of previous roles, or inability to make active contribution to society.

Senior citizen is a common euphemism for an old person used in American English, and sometimes in British English. It implies or means that the person being referred to is retired. This in turn usually implies or in fact means that the person is over the retirement age, which varies according to country. The term 'senior citizen', has come into widespread use in recent decades. The distinguishing marks associated with old age comprise both physical and mental characteristics. The marks of old age are so unlike the marks of middle age that it has been suggested that, as an individual

transitions into old age, he/she might well be thought of as different persons “time-sharing” the same identity. Happiness is a positive emotional state. It involves the detailed evaluation of one’s current position in the world. It is the sum total of positive effect and general life satisfaction. It is flourishing of human beings and associated with living a life of virtue. The happiness level of a person is governed by three factors which are a set

point for happiness, happiness relevant circumstantial factors, and happiness-producing activities and practices. There are two traditions on happiness. They are eudemonic and hedonic.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Review of related literature is an important pre-requisite for actual planning and carrying out of any research work. The present section represents a brief review of the researches done in the area related to the present investigation.

Research in happiness and aging has been growing in recent decades.

Graney, Marshall J. (1975) reports on a four-year longitudinal study of 60 elderly women. Data about their happiness and social activities were collected using the Affect Balance Scale and nine measures of socially relevant activities. Direct relationships between happiness and social activity among elderly people were found.

Fengler, Alfred P etal (1983) reexamined the NORC Happiness Scale based on a survey of 1400 urban and nonurban elderly. Results indicated a high proportion of urban elderly were bored, depressed, and lonely as well as proud, excited, and interested. Their apparent inconsistent feeling states may result from a general feeling of deprivation.

Galambos, Nancy L. etal (2015) studied that happiness is an important indicator of well-being, and little is known about how it changes in the early adult years. They examined trajectories of happiness from early adulthood to midlife in two Canadian longitudinal samples: high school seniors followed from ages 18-43 and university seniors followed from ages 23-37. Happiness increased into the 30s in both samples, with a slight downturn by age 43 in the high school sample. The rise in happiness after high school and university remained after controlling for important baseline covariates (gender, parents' education, grades, self-esteem), time-varying covariates known to be associated with happiness (marital status, unemployment, self-rated physical health), and number of waves of participation. The upward trend in happiness runs counter to some previous cross-sectional research claiming a high point in happiness in the late teens, decreasing into midlife. As cross-sectional designs do not assess within-person change, longitudinal studies are necessary for drawing accurate conclusions about patterns of change in happiness across the life span.

Balish, Shea M etal (2016) conducted a study with the following purpose: Preliminary findings suggest sport participation is positively associated with happiness. However, it is unknown if this association is universal and how sport compares to other leisure activities in terms of an association with happiness. This study had 3 objectives: (a) to test if sport membership is associated with happiness, (b) to test if this relationship is universal, and (c) to compare sport membership to other leisure activities. Method:

Hierarchical Bernoulli modeling was used to analyze the 6th wave (2014) of the World Values Survey ($n_{\text{Ss}} = 67,736$, $n_{\text{countries}} = 48$). The critical variables included measures of membership in different leisure activities (e.g., sport membership) and self-reported happiness. Results: Even when controlling for known covariates such as perceived health, those who report sport/recreation membership are more likely to report being happy compared with non-sport members (OR = 1.38; 95% CI [1.24, 1.53]). Being a member of a sport organization had a greater association with happiness than did being a member of other leisure activities. Follow-up analyses suggested that this association is nearly universal. Conclusions: This study offers initial evidence that sport membership elicits happiness across many different societies. Although the causal direction remains unclear, this study establishes a positive association between happiness and sport membership. Future research should target the mechanism(s) of this effect, which we hypothesize are meaningful social relations.

Flynn, Deborah M (2015) explored the relationship between happiness, and six other life domains: Academic Success, Financial Security, Familial Support, Living Environment, Self-Image and Social Relations. Participants were one hundred and ninety-two students from a small undergraduate university. The purpose of the study was to determine which life domain had the greatest influence on student happiness. Assessment tools included the Oxford Happiness Inventory, the Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale, and a Financial Success Survey created by the authors. Results indicated that Self-esteem, Academic Success and Financial Security, respectively, explained most of the variance in student's happiness.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives 1. To study the happiness of senior citizens (males) from community and non-community living. 2. To study the happiness of senior citizens (females) from community living and non-community living.

Hypothesis 1. There will be a significant difference in the happiness of senior citizens (males) from community and non-community living. 2. There will be a significant difference in the happiness of senior citizens (females) from community living and non-community living.

Sample The study was conducted on a sample of 100 senior citizens, males and females from community and non-community living residences in the city of Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Out of the 50 from community living, 25 were males and 25 were females. Same was the case in non-community living. The residents of non-community living were from the elderly living in different areas of Chennai with their families and those from community living were from an old age home. Standardized tool used for the study was Happiness scale by Dr. Rastogi and Dr. Moorjani. Statistical analysis used was mean, SD and 't' test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table No.1 Table showing mean, SD and t values for happiness of senior citizens from community and non- community living

Community	Mean	SD	't' value	Level of Significance	Level of Significance
Community living	299.36	6.207	28.538	S *	S *
Non -Community living	189.78	26.432			

*Significant at .01 level

Table No.2 Table showing mean, SD and 't' values for happiness of senior citizens (males) from community and non- community living

Community	Mean	SD	't' value	Level of Significance
Male in Community living	300.24	5.939	63.886	S *
Male in Non- Community living	200.64	5.049		

*Significant at .01 level

Table No.3 Table showing mean, SD and t values for happiness of senior citizens (females) from community and non -community living

Community	Mean	SD	't' value	Level of Significance
Female in Community living	298.48	6.462	17.279	S *
Female in Non -Community living	178.92	33.989		

Table No.4 Table showing mean, SD and t values for happiness of senior citizens (males and females) from community living

Community	Mean	SD	't' value	Level of Significance
Male in Community living	300.24	5.939	1.003	S*
Female in Community living	298.48	6.462		

Table No.5 Table showing mean, SD and t values for happiness of senior citizens (males and females) from non -community living

Community	Mean	SD	't' value	Level of Significance
Male in Non -Community living	200.64	5.049	3.160	NS*
Female in Non- Community living	178.92	33.989		

*Significant at .01 level

The mean and 't' values depicted in the tables mentioned above show a significant difference in the happiness of senior citizens from community and non- community living, senior citizens (males) from community and non- community living, senior citizens (females) from community and non- community living and senior citizens

(males and females) from community living. No significant difference was found in the happiness of senior citizens (males and females) from non-community

CONCLUSION

Since there are significant differences in senior citizens in community living than non-community living, it can be understood that when elderly find company they are happier than those who live without company.

Each phase of life has challenges that come with the potential for fear. Erik H. Erikson (1902–1994), in his view of socialization, broke the typical life span into eight phases. Each phase presents a particular challenge that must be overcome. In the final stage, old age, the challenge is to embrace integrity over despair. Some people are unable to successfully overcome the challenge. They may have to confront regrets, such as being disappointed in their children's lives or perhaps their own. They may have to accept that they will never reach certain career goals. Or they must come to terms with what their career success had cost them, such as time with their family or declining personal health. Others, however, are able to achieve a strong sense of integrity, embracing the new phase in life. When that happens, there is tremendous potential for creativity. They can learn new skills, practice new activities, and peacefully prepare for the end of life. Others require more care. Because the elderly typically no longer hold jobs, finances can be a challenge. Due to cultural misconceptions, older people can be targets of ridicule and stereotypes. The elderly face many challenges in later life. According to the activity theory, activity levels and social involvement are keys to happiness (Havinghurst 1961; Havinghurst, Neugarten, and Tobin 1968; Neugarten 1964). According to this theory, the more active and involved an elderly person is, the happier he or she will be. Critics of this theory point out that access to social opportunities and activity are not equally available to all. The theory proposes that activity is a solution to the happiness of seniors without being able to account for how the distribution of access to these social opportunities and activities reflects broader issues of power and inequality in society. Moreover, not everyone finds fulfillment in the presence of others or participation in activities. Reformulations of this theory suggest that participation in informal activities, such as hobbies, are what most effect later life satisfaction (Lemon, Bengtson, and Petersen 1972). A micro analytical theory by Rose (1962) subculture of aging theory, focuses on the shared community created by the elderly when they are excluded (due to age), voluntarily or involuntarily, from participating in other groups. This theory suggests that elders will disengage from society and develop new patterns of interaction with peers who share common backgrounds and interests. For example, a group consciousness may develop within such groups as CARP around issues specific to the elderly including health care, retirement security, continuing care, and elder abuse focused on creating social and political pressure to fix those issues. Whether brought together by social or political interests, or even geographic regions, elders may find a strong sense of community with their new group.

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