

## **STUDY ON HAPPINESS AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG SENIOR CITIZENS**

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### **Abstract**

*This study is comprised of two distinct elements, that is happiness and life satisfaction. Different approaches to measuring happiness and life satisfaction are considered and common themes are identified. This research makes it clear that the definition and use of notions such as happiness and satisfaction is contested. The aim of the study is to examine the existing relationship between happiness and life satisfaction among senior citizens in Mysore. The sample for the study consisted of 60 senior citizens with in which there are 30 men and 30 women were selected through the purposive sampling method. Measure Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Ed Diener and colleagues (Diener et al, 1985; Pavot & Diener, 1993) and Hills Argyle, M. (2002). The Oxford Happiness questionnaire. In this study the happiness and life satisfaction correlation between the samples were measured. The result reveal that the men are highly satisfied than the women. Therefore, it is concluded that senior citizen differs in their happiness and life satisfaction on the basis of gender. Hence, the hypothesis is not accepted. This indicates that happiness was found more among those who have high life satisfaction.*

*Key words: happiness, life satisfaction, & senior citizen*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The ordinary concept of 'happiness' is ambiguous. It is often merely used to describe how a person feels, i.e., a particular phenomenological state of the person. This is the state we are in when we feel contentment, satisfaction, euphoria, and the like. Most of us have had direct experiences of feeling happy in this way. For instance, we usually feel happy when we unexpectedly see an old friend whom we haven't seen for a while. When the term 'happiness' is used in this first sense, nothing more is required to be happy than to feel happy or to be in a happy mood. Hereafter, I will use the sub-indexed term 'happiness' to refer to this kind of happiness. This is because sometimes it is also called 'psychological' (or 'local') happiness. The

second sense of 'happiness' is often said to be 'deeper' than the first one. It encompasses much more than agents' mere momentary phenomenological states. Consider a case in which a person uses drugs in order to feel euphoric. In such cases, we might hesitate to say that this person becomes genuinely happy even if she feels happy as a result (Sizer, 2010). Happiness in this second sense seems to thus require more than merely experiencing sensations of happiness. We typically use the term 'happiness' in this second way when we assess a longer period of an agent's life. For instance, when we talk about a person having been happy in the 1990s, we do not mean just that the person had many euphoric experiences during that decade. In fact, some people may feel miserable for much of the happy periods of their lives (Feldman, 2002,). For instance, consider the life of an Olympic athlete who undergoes a grueling four-year training regime in order to prepare for the next games. Whatever the outcome of the Olympics is for the athlete, it is conceivable that she later thinks of this period in her life as a happy one. In addition, some philosophers use the term 'happiness' in a third sense (Feldman, 2008,). When they talk about the happiness of an agent, all they mean is that the agent is living a good life. I will use the sub-indexed expression 'happiness' for this third use of the term 'happiness'. It is also sometimes called 'eudaimonic happiness' or 'prudential happiness'. So, to summarize, it seems like being happy requires more than just feeling happy (i.e., being happy). Yet, it does not seem to necessarily require as much as living a life with a high level of wellbeing (i.e., being happy). My main goal is then to consider what is required for happiness.

Life satisfaction is a complex term and is sometimes used interchangeably with the emotion of happiness, but they are indeed two separate concepts. Life satisfaction is defined as one's evaluation of life as a whole, rather than the feelings and emotions that are experienced in the moment. Life satisfaction is an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a particular point in time ranging from negative to positive. It is one of three major indicators of well-being: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect (Diener, 1984). Although satisfaction with current life circumstances is often assessed in research studies, Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith (1999) also include the following under life satisfaction: desire to change one's life; satisfaction with past; satisfaction with future; and significant other's views of one's life." (Beutell). On the above ground the present research aimed at studying the relationship between happiness and life satisfaction among senior citizens. Further it was attempted to explore the effect of demographic variables on happiness and life satisfaction among senior citizens.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study are as follows;

1. To find out the relationship between Happiness and Life Satisfaction among Senior Citizens.
2. To find out the difference between men and women with regard to Happiness.
3. To find out the difference between men and women with regard to Life Satisfaction.

## **HYPOTHESES**

1. There will be no significant relationship between Happiness and Life Satisfaction among Senior Citizens.
2. Senior citizens do not differ in happiness on the basis of gender.
3. Senior citizens do not differ in life satisfaction on the basis of gender.

## **SAMPLE**

A sample of 60 senior citizens from Mysore city Karnataka, out of which 30 are men and 30 women are selected for the samples were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study. The total sample collected for the current study was 60. Among the participants, 30 were men and 30 were women. Purposive sampling technique was employed for selecting the samples. Totally 60 questionnaires were distributed to the senior citizens, all the questionnaire were found complete and taken for final analysis.

## **METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

The researcher decided to collect sample from Mysore, Karnataka. The data was conducted among the senior citizens from Mysore. The personal information data sheets include information relating to men and women senior citizens. Sixty copies of happiness and life satisfaction scale along with personal data sheet were printed and bound in booklet form. The printed questionnaires were distributed to the senior citizens by given suitable instructions as how to answer and what purpose it serves etc. The method of answering the questionnaire was explained to them, they were told that there was no time limit, but they will have to answer as early as possible. At the top of each questionnaire instructions were given as how to answer the questionnaire. Totally 60 questionnaires were distributed to the 30 men and 30 women, all the questionnaire were found complete and taken for final analysis.

Tool Used:

- a) The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Ed Diener and colleagues (Diener et al, 1985; Pavot & Diener, 1993). A 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one's life satisfaction (not a measure of either positive or negative affect).

Participants indicate how much they agree or disagree with each of the 5 items using a 7-point scale that ranges from 7 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree.

- b) Hills., Argyle, M. (2002). The Oxford Happiness questionnaire: a compact scale for the measurement of psychological well-being. Personality and individual differences, Items marked (R) should be scored in reverse: For example, if you gave yourself a “1,” cross it out and change it to a “6.” Change “2” to a “5” Change “3” to a “4” Change “4” to a “3” Change “5” to a “2” Change “6” to a “1”. Add the numbers for all 29 questions. (Use the converted numbers for the 12 items that are reverse scored.) Divide by 29. So, your happiness score = the total (from step 2) divided by 29. Your Happiness Score.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table: 1 showing the Mean, SD and t-value for happiness scores of senior citizens on the basis of gender**

variable	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
<b>Happiness</b>	male	30	4.236	0.680	
	female	30	3.687	0.602	3.281**

**\*\*significant at 0.01 level**

The Mean, SD and t-value for happiness scores of senior citizens on the basis of gender are furnished in table 1. It is observed from the above table that the mean happiness value of male citizen is 4.236, while mean happiness value of female citizen is 3.687, their standard deviation values are 0.680, and 0.602, respectively. The calculated ‘t’-value is found 3.281, which is significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, it is concluded that senior citizen differs in their happiness on the basis of gender. Hence, the hypothesis is not accepted.

**Table: 2 showing the Mean, SD and t-value for life satisfaction scores of senior citizens on the basis of gender**

variable	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
<b>Life satisfaction</b>	male	30	26.76	5.386	
	female	30	23.20	4.601	2.725**

**\*\*significant at 0.01 level**

The Mean, SD and t-value for happiness scores of senior citizens on the basis of gender are furnished in table 2. It is observed from the above table that the mean life satisfaction value of

male citizen is 26.76, while mean life satisfaction value of female citizen is 23.20, their standard deviation values are 5.386, and 4.601, respectively. The calculated 't'-value is found 2.725, which is significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, it is concluded that senior citizen differ in their life satisfaction on the basis of gender. Hence, the hypothesis is not accepted.

**Table: 3 Showing the correlation coefficients between the happiness and life satisfaction**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Life satisfaction</b>	<b>LS</b>
<b>Happiness</b>	r= 0.651**	p<0.01

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

The table 3, shows that there is a significant relationship between happiness and life satisfaction ( $r=0.651$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and therefore, there is a positive relationship between happiness and life satisfaction. Hence, the hypothesis is not accepted. This indicates that happiness was found more among those who have high life satisfaction. In the previous studies shows that there was less study conducted on happiness and life satisfaction among senior citizen together. Found out one author named Susan Mathieu (2008) conducted a study on Happiness and Humor Group Promotes Life Satisfaction for Senior Center Participants. Study says that Scores from this self-rated assessment showed significant improvement in life satisfaction for the program participants. Anecdotal evidence also shows participants' outlook changed significantly as a result of program participation. An overview of the Happiness and Humor Group program is provided as a model that can be replicated in senior centers.

## **CONCLUSION**

- There is a positive relationship between happiness and life satisfaction among senior citizen.
- There is difference between men and women with regard to Happiness.
- There is difference between men and women in Life Satisfaction.
- Hence, the hypothesis is not accepted. This indicates that happiness was found more among those who have high life satisfaction.

## **LIMITATIONS**

The study is titled "Happiness and Life satisfaction among senior citizens": A correlational study, its aims to find out the differences, The objective of the study is to understand the relationship in the above-mentioned study happiness and life satisfaction among senior citizens.

- The total size of the sample was 60 senior citizens in that 30 men and 30 women participants.
- The measures have not been taken to match them on age.
- The questionnaires used to measure the correlation between the happiness and life satisfaction among senior citizens from Mysore.
- There was no qualitative interview with the participants which could have provided more insight into the difference that exist and why they exist.
- The study was conducted on smaller sample of 60 senior citizens in Mysuru City. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalized.

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