



## Gender Differences on Quality of Life, Physical Activity and Happiness

### KEYWORDS

Quality of Life, Physical Activity, Happiness

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to assess the differences in Quality of Life, Physical Activity and Happiness between Males and Females residing in South Delhi. For the purpose of the study, data was collected from 170 males and females on Convenient Sampling. They were above 17 years of age with mean value of 32.98 years. The data for Quality of Life was collected by administering Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI) by Michael B. Frisch, PhD, for Physical Activity by administering International Physical Activity Questionnaire by C.L. Craig et al and for Happiness data was collected by administering the Happiness Questionnaire by Peterson Park and Seligman. The result was analysed by applying Descriptive Statistics and differences was computed by applying Independent t-test where significance level was set at 0.01 and 0.05 level. For Happiness, insignificant difference was found between genders with mean value of  $61.28 \pm 8.37$  and  $62.34 \pm 8.26$  for males and females respectively. However, significant difference at 0.01 level was found in their physical activity with  $7476.41 \pm 6023.96$  for males and  $4726.46 \pm 3316.01$  for females. As far as Quality of Life is concerned, a significant difference at 0.05 level was found between genders. It was concluded that still, in our society, gender determine the role of an individual in the family where males are indulge more in outdoor work to earn for the family in comparison to females. Findings also revealed that due to being less ambitious, females are more satisfied with their life than males.

### INTRODUCTION

Exercise psychology is the study of psychological processes and behaviours related to exercise participation. With having enormous health benefits, physical activity has also linked to various psychological benefits (Cox, 1998; Paffenbarger, 1994; Pate et al., 1995). The strength of the relationship between regular exercise and positive mental health has led to the adoption of a position statement by the International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP, 1992). The position statement reviews the literature on the relationship between exercise and psychological benefits and culminates in six specific statements: a) Exercise can be associated with reduced state anxiety, b) Exercise can be associated with a decreased level of mild to moderate depression, c) long term exercise is usually associated with reductions in neuroticism and anxiety, d) Exercise may be an adjunct to the professional treatment of severe depression, e) Exercise can result in the reduction of various stress indices, f) Exercise can have beneficial emotional effects across all ages and both genders.

Above mentioned statements focused on the benefits of exercise on positive mental health which can be achieved by positive psychology which is a recent branch of psychology. It's "the scientific study of what goes right in life" (Peterson, 2006). As suggested by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) one way of understanding positive psychology is by dividing in into 3 parts which are as follows: (Part A) positive psychology is subjective experience e.g. happiness, fulfilment, (Part B) positive individual traits e.g. talents, values and (Part C) positive institutions e.g. families, schools. Positive institutions facilitate development of positive traits which in turn facilitates positive subjective experience. Quality of life is the measure of happiness of an individual in comparison to others in a particular area such as health, self-esteem, work, goals & values, home, relationships, creativity etc. However, happiness is a central criterion of mental health (Jahoda, 1958; Taylor and Brown, 1988) and has been found to be associated with nu-

merous tangible benefits, such as enhanced physical health, reduced psychopathology, superior coping skills and even longer life. Happiness is also of concern to positive psychology because it is of concern to people in general (Peterson, 2006; King and Napa, 1998).

**Various studies has shown that physical activity enhances psychological well-being and relieves symptoms of depression and anxiety. Here are some of the factors describing the effect of physical activity on Quality of Life and Happiness:**

- Regular exercise helps one to feel in control. This sense of control over the body may translate to an improved sense of control over other aspects of life.
- Exercise promotes well-being and relaxation. It demonstrates higher levels of self-esteem and confidence and maintains a sense of self discipline. The person feels, "I am in charge of myself and can improve my health and fitness".
- Moderate physical activity is a natural, physiological outlet for a body in the "fight or flight" state of arousal frequently associated with stress.
- Exercise produces neurotransmitters called endorphins in the brain. These are the body's own natural tranquilizer which produces calming effect and relaxes the body.
- Physically active people give up unhealthy and stressful habits that interfere with exercise. They cut down smoking habit, eats nutritious food etc.
- Exercise done in group provides social support, another stress reliever.

Undoubtedly, the above discussion has shown the inevitable relationship among physical activity, quality of life and happiness. But, no study has conducted to assess whether the males and females equally gets affected by mentioned variables. This motivated Research Scholar to explore the gender differences on Quality of life, happiness and physical activity.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Sample Size

The data was collected from 170 males and females of South Delhi on convenient sampling with mean age of 32.98. There were 92 males and 78 females participated in the study.

### Criterion Measure

The variables Quality of life, Happiness and Physical Activity was tested by administering the standardized questionnaires as follows: Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI) by Michael B. Frisch, PhD, for Physical Activity by administering International Physical Activity Questionnaire by C.L. Craig et al and for Happiness data was collected by administering the Happiness Questionnaire by Peterson Park and Seligman.

### Statistical Technique

The data was described by Descriptive Analysis (Mean and SD) whereas the differences between gender on Quality of life, Happiness and Physical Activity were computed by t-test.

### Administration of Test

The data was collected from resident of South Delhi area of New Delhi. Subjects were informed about the study and its purpose and their consent was taken before administering questionnaire. The sequential order of administering questionnaire in order to obtain responses was as follows: firstly, Happiness Questionnaire, secondly, International Physical Activity Questionnaire and lastly, Quality of Life Inventory.

## RESULT

The mean value of Happiness for male and female were found to be  $61.28 \pm 8.37$  and  $62.34 \pm 8.26$  respectively. For physical activity, the values on same measure were  $7476.41 \pm 6023.96$  for male and  $4726.46 \pm 3316.01$  for female. On Quality of Life, mean value for male was  $36.91 \pm 29.09$  whereas for female it was  $45 \pm 14.6$

In the result, there was no significant difference found for Happiness of male and female with mean difference of 1.06. As obvious, there was a huge difference found in physical activity of male and female. With mean difference of 2749.95, the physical activity of male and female were significantly differed ( $p > 0.01$ ) as the t value was calculated 3.76. Quality of Life of male and female were found significantly different on 0.05 level with t value 2.34. The interpretation of data reveals that gender influences the Quality of life and the level of physical activity.

Significance of Mean Difference between Male and Female on Happiness, Physical Activity and Quality of Life

VARIABLE	GEN- DER	MEAN	SD	MEAN DIFFER- ENCE	SED	t
HAPPI- NESS	MALE	61.28	8.37	-1.06	1.28	0.83
	FE- MALE	62.34	8.26	-1.06	1.28	
PHYSI- CAL ACTIV- ITY	MALE	7476.41	6023.96	2749.95	731.52	3.76**
	FE- MALE	4726.46	3316.01	2749.95	764.7	
QUALITY OF LIFE	MALE	36.91	29.09	-8.09	3.45	2.34*
	FE- MALE	45	14.6	-8.09	3.63	

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level

\* Significant at 0.05 level

## DISCUSSION

The findings show that insignificant difference exist between male and female for happiness. But, the mean value for females was found to be marginally higher than males. The Quality of Life of females was found significantly better than males. Higher mean value among females could be because

of the reason that female are satisfied in their own world. However, their upbringing is such that they are taught to get satisfied with whatever they have in their hands. They feel happy to see that their family is happy. They are also less ambitious than males and their top priority is always their family and society. But, males are more physically active than female as the findings have shown significant difference. In our society, gender determines the role of an individual in the family. Still, males are expected to earn for the family. Therefore, males go out for the work and thus are more physically active than female. However, female are also engaged in household work which is equally tedious. Differences in their gender specific role could be one of the possible reasons for their difference in the physical activity.

## CONCLUSION

It was concluded that still, in our society, gender determine the role of an individual in the society. Males are indulging more in outdoor work to earn for the family in comparison to females. Findings also revealed that due to being less ambitious, self-satisfied and pro-family and pro-society, women are more contented with their life than males. It can also be concluded that there is no direct relationship of Quality of Life and Happiness with Physical Activity because they are multidimensional dependent on many social and environmental factors.

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