

## A Comparative Study of Happiness among Adolescents

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### ABSTRACT

The present study investigates to compare happiness among girls and boys adolescents in higher secondary student. For this purpose a sample of 100 higher secondary students, 50 girls and 50 boys, residing in the Narmada district of the state of Gujarat was taken. An improved instrument, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ), has been derived from the Oxford Happiness Inventory were used to measure Happiness. In order to find out the difference between means of adolescents girls and boys on different variables, t-test was applied. The result shows that 't' value is 2.40 that is significant at 0.01 level. Results showed significant girls and boys differences in the levels on Happiness. It means Girls and Boys are difference in Happiness.

**Keywords:** *Happiness, Gender Difference.*

**H**appiness, in the form of joy, appears in every typology of “basic” human emotions. Being happy is of great importance to most people, and happiness has been found to be a highly valued goal in most societies (Diener, 2000). The largest divide is between hedonic views of happiness as pleasant feelings and favorable judgments versus eudemonic views of happiness involving doing what is virtuous, morally right, true to oneself, meaningful and/or growth producing (Ryan & Desi, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Argyle, Martin and Crossland (1989) believe that happiness is composed of three related components- positive effects, absence of negative effects and satisfaction with life as a whole. All of us want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, want to enhance our experiences of love and relationship.

Research on adolescents' happiness is so far inadequate and mostly comprises studies on life satisfaction (Fogle, Huebner, & Laughlin, 2002; Funk III, Huebner & Valois, 2006). The study of adolescents' happiness is important, because in this period of life different events and transitions may influence children and adolescents' development and well-being (Erikson, 1968; González, Casas, & Coenders 2007). During adolescence, daily problems (e.g., coping with a minor social conflict) seem to be equally stressful experiences as major

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life events (e.g., parent being remarried; McCullough, Huebner, & Laughlin, 2000). If adolescents are realistic about the degree of acceptance they can achieve, and are satisfied with the people who accept & show affection to them their chances for happiness are greatly increased. Besides problems in academics, young people face issues that relate to the 'developmental tasks' of adolescence, which revolve around identity, independence, love, sex & unwanted teenage pregnancies, money, alcohol & various other drug misuses, suicide, cyber bullying, unhealthy peer relationships etc. Some adolescents have the resilience to overcome these struggles, while others simply get stuck. Positive mental health among adolescents is characterized by the achievement of developmental and emotional milestones, healthy social development, and effective coping skills; such that mentally healthy children have a positive quality of life and can function well at home, in school, and in their communities.

An average middle class family spends much of their time, money and other resources to educate and promote career prospects and future happiness of their children. The society, dominated by nuclear families, is becoming more and more child-centric, parents are willing to satisfy all the needs of their children in order to see their children competent as well as happy, even if the needs are unaffordable according to family's financial status. Although today's children enjoy all sorts of materialistic pleasures, the current statistical records of suicide, substance abuse, early initiation of sexual activities and other socially unacceptable, self-harming and dangerous behaviors among teens is seen to increase tremendously indicating a poor mental health. It is believed that while society focus on the material aspects like academics and physical development they pay scant attention to emotional and mental health of the children. If the results indicate poor happiness among the sample it can provide opportunities for parents, school authorities and society as a whole to take remedial steps and assists the younger generation to adapt to the challenges of life.(C. Mariam Chacko, S. Soosan Abraham,2017)

Who are happier, girls or boys? Does the gender difference, if any, vary over the life cycle? The answers to these questions are a puzzle. It was important to study how adolescent boys and girls differ in perceiving happiness. Therefore, the present study investigates the happiness profile of adolescents.

### **METHOD**

#### ***Objective:***

- To compare psychological happiness among girls and boys adolescents in higher secondary students.

#### ***Hypotheses:***

- There will be a no significant gender difference on happiness among girls and boys higher secondary students.

#### ***Participants:***

The sample consisted of 100 students between 14 to 18 years of age was selected randomly residing in the Narmada district of the state of Gujarat was taken. The sample was divided to have equal number of girls (n = 50) and boys (n = 50).

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### ***Instruments:***

*The following measures were used to measure happiness of the respondents.*

**The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ, Hills & Argyle, 2002):** An improved instrument, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ), has been derived from the Oxford Happiness Inventory, (OHI). The OHI comprises 29 items, participants respond to each item using a 6-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The OHQ demonstrates high scale reliabilities with values (168)=0.91. The inter-item correlations for the OHQ ranged from 0.04 to 0.65, mean 0.28

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Mean and S.D. of scores on Happiness scales were calculated. T-test was used to find out the difference between Happiness scores of higher secondary adolescents. The Results obtained are presented in the following table.

***Table 1. Gender differences in perception of happiness (Mean and SD) as perceived by adolescents***

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>
Happiness	Girls	50	17.38990	1.1914	2.459302	2.400	<0.01
	Boys	50	13.15715	1.2654	1.86070		

Table shows that there is significant difference in Happiness between girls and boys. Based on the table. However, girls had greater mean than boys on happiness, girl had 17.38 and 13.15 means had boys and their SDs were 1.19 and 1.26 respectively. The t-ratio between the means of the two groups was found to be 2.40 which was significant at 0.01 level of significant. The mean happiness scores among two groups were significantly different, with girls scoring higher as compared to boys. It shows that girls perceived more happiness as compared to boys. Findings are also supported with the results of Argyle and Lu-1990, N. Hasnain, S. Wasfeea Wazid, Z. Hasan, 2007. Stephens, Dulberg & Joubert (1999) found gender differences in happiness.

The present study was conducted to assess Gender differences in perception of happiness as perceived by adolescents, among higher secondary students. (C. Mariam Chacko, S. Soosan Abraham 2017), our stereotype mentality believes that the males of the society have strength of expectations to provide adequate protection to women and children. We all are expected from the men, earn a good living and better socio-political environment it's all men's responsibility and this is one of the reason of their unhappiness. Financial situation is more often the cause of unhappiness for boys than for girls. Boys expressed dissatisfaction with what they obtain at present and their expectation for more in the future. Boys are more likely to hope for advancing their careers and earning livelihood, while women do not feel the pressure to do so and enjoy adequate independence in their own sphere. (N. Sharma, J. Kaur Gulati, 2015).

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Findings are also supported with the results of Nolen-Hoeksema and Rusting (1999) report that “a number of studies have found that women report experiencing greater happiness and more intense positive emotions than men” The expectation to earn a good living and better socio-political environment, males gain their strength to make the constructive contribution to their family and society and started conflict for male adolescence. Recent statistical analyses by economists of large data sets for the United States, United Kingdom, and a number of continental European nations also find that women are happier (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2001; DiTella, MacCulloch, and Oswald, 2001; Oswald, 1997).

### CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that there is significant difference in happiness of Girls and Boys adolescents. Our new era Girls were significantly happier than boys because of they can enjoy the same educational and career opportunities as boys.

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