



## A study of Subjective Happiness of Retired Employees in Bihar

Adnaan Ahmad

Junior Research Fellow- Deptt. of Psychology, Indian Institute of Technology,  
Kharagpur, (West Bengal), India.

Received- 25.07.2020, Revised- 28.07.2020, Accepted - 30.07.2020 Email :jahan.rahmat@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *Growing old is generally not an easy process and includes various changes which require an individual to make multiple adjustments with respect to their stamina, ability and flexibility. Through retirement an individual gets financially unproductive and this new phase of life demands major adjustments in one's life. Many consider this as the first indicator of the impact of ageing.*

**Key Words:** generally, process, includes, various, changes, require, individual, adjustments .

Change in one's life demands a new routine, which further requires an entirely new incentive for its reinforcement. Along with retirement losses are incurred in different ways, and these need to be compensated in another way. Nevertheless, different people perceive retirement differently. While some take it as an opportunity to spend more time with friends and family, others sulk in the feeling of being unproductive and feeling down. Many times this pessimistic attitude leads to depression. In the field of Developmental Psychology as well, retirement is viewed as a mid-life crisis which needs to be handled well in order to make the transition smooth.

Retirement is a significant moment in one's life which leads to many changes. The transition from life with work to life with no work takes a toll on an individual both physically and mentally. The way we respond to such changes goes on to determine how well our adjustment will be in our new phase of life and subsequently will determine our subjective and psychological well-being.

The ambiguities surrounding retirement has been described as a role without role by few gerontologists. Although retirement is considered one of the most important later life transitions, our knowledge regarding the consequences which it has psychologically is sketchy and in form of bits and pieces. For elders, retiring from their career marks a milestone, signifying their transitions into the later stages of adulthood. However, it is not a simple

change in one's life, but is also a subjective developmental and social-psychological transformation that may be related to one's physical and psychological well-being.

Miller(1965) opines that retirement is usually associated with loss of occupational identity. Similarly Erikson(1982) was of view that in the final stage of ego development the challenge is to achieve emotional integrity i.e., emotional understanding that life events have unfolded with purposefulness and meaning. Retirement when viewed pessimistically has an adverse effect on the physical and mental health of an individual. Generally, retirement has been found stressful for certain retirees under certain circumstances. Apart from this, retirement demands a psycho-social transition, which lowers the well-being of retirees.

Taking the Indian context into consideration, it is usually observed that a significant part of a person's self-esteem is shaped by the job profile he/she holds which further validates his social esteem. Thus, when retirement dawns upon at the fag end of a person's career it is very evident that a person faces significant adjustment issues to come to terms with reality.

**Methodology-** Rationale: Having a look at the prevalent social norms and criteria for societal prestige in Bihar, it is evident that a major part of a person's social prestige is related to his/her job profile. Apart from this, the psychological satisfaction of being economically productive



enhances a person's self-esteem. It is thus, very likely that when such persons close on in their retirement age, they find it hard to come to terms with reality. Retirement marks mid-life crisis in males particularly and the distress among them is particularly visible.

This research will help to find out the present level satisfaction and adaptability of retired individuals and will further look forward to suggest ways to help them adapt and cope better.

**Philosophical Assumption:** The philosophical assumption adopted for the present study will be Ontology.

**Ontology** has been chosen for the present study due to the fact that there are multiple perspectives through which an individual views his/her retirement phase. Someone whose family is well settled and supportive might welcome this change, while others who still harbor some major household responsibility might be resistant to it. Thus, the present study will find out different realities of subjective well-being of retired employees in Patna. **Paradigms:** Post Positivism- Since the present study involves the use of quantitative measurement tool, therefore post positivism has been selected as a paradigm to go forward with.

**Pragmatism-** This perspective has been adopted for the study because of the fact that the present study apart from ascertaining the level of subjective well-being and adaptability also aims to suggest ways and solutions to enhance the level. The study aims to find "what" can be done to enhance the level among the retired employees.

**Aim:** The present study was undertaken to ascertain the level of subjective happiness among retired employees of Patna. The specific objectives of the study are as under:

**Objectives-**

- (i) To study the level of subjective happiness among retired employees.
- (ii) To study the ways by which retired employees facing crisis can be helped to adapt and cope better.

**Procedure-** The sample of the present

study will include 20 retired employees from Bihar. Sample would be drawn using Purposive Sampling Method. Prior consent will be taken from the participants and they will be made to go an elaborative open ended interview session. Subjective Happiness Scale will also be used as a tool to further validate the findings of the study from the other dimension as is usually done in triangulation.

**Measuring Instruments:**

**1. Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999)**

**Result and Discussion:** The main objectives of this research study were to examine the impact which retirement has on an individual from a psychological viewpoint, how the individual's unrestrained free time affect the individual's quality of life which individuals use to cope with after effects of retirement. The philosophical assumption undertaken was ontology and hence an attempt was made to explore the different realities prevailing with respect to retired persons in Patna with respect to their Quality of Life and Subjective Happiness. With respect to Subjective Happiness it was seen that majority of the participants were well adjusted with their routine after retirement and were satisfied with their life, while others were still struggling with coming to terms with their retirement. The above findings can be attributed to the fact that the well adjusted retirees had been retired for a relatively longer period of time as compared to their counterparts. Contrary to popular belief, many of the retired employees reported being satisfied with their lives. The finding can be explained through the inclination of the respondent towards religion and spirituality.

The paradigms employed in the study were pragmatism and Post Positivism. Withholding the characteristics of Post Positivism worldview, a standardized scale was used in the present study. The pragmatic worldview of the researchers contributed in them offering a solution based approach for the better welfare of the retired employees.



The respondents felt that they got along well with their immediate family members just as they did before post retirement. It can be explained through the viewpoint that a large number of families in Bihar comprise of Joint Family and the bond among the family members is very strong as compared to the metropolitan cities of the country. It can also be substantiated with the less number of old age homes in and around Patna.

The present study further underwent triangulation and was cross checked with the standardized version of Subjective Happiness Scale. The mean score of 18.2 on the scale indicated that the respondents were moderately happy with their life after retirement and hence this also supports our qualitative finding of them being adjusted and having a decent quality of life.

#### REFERENCES

1. Erikson, E. H. (1964). *Insight and responsibility*. New York: Norton.
2. Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: Norton.
3. Erikson E. H. (1982). *The life cycle completed*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
4. Miller, S. J. (1965). *The social dilemma of the aging leisure participant*. In A. Rose and W. Petersen (Eds.), *Older people and their social world*. Philadelphia: Davis.
5. Hurst, Erik. "Understanding Consumption in Retirement: Recent Developments", in *Recalibrating Retirement Spending and Saving*, Oxford University Press. (2008): Chapter 3. Print.
6. Lyubomirsky, S. & Tucker, K. L. (1998). *Implications of Individual Differences in Subjective Happiness for Perceiving, Interpreting, and Thinking About Life Events*. *Motivation and Emotion*, 22, 155-186.
7. Stancanelli, Elena, and Arthur Van Soest. "Retirement and Home Production: A Regression Discontinuity Approach." *IZA*. 6229. (2011): n. page. Print.

\*\*\*\*\*