

Qualitative research: when people are at their happiest



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Abstract

The main aim of this research was to assess when people are at their happiest, previous research that was carried out was explored for an in-depth knowledge of how individual states of happiness varies and also that happiness mean different things to different people. Happiness is one of the most important part of life for people to attain good health. Thematic analysis method was used in this qualitative research study and a semi structured interview was carried out on two participant's one male and one female. There were four key themes that emerged from the analysed transcripts, the themes were: Relationship, Well-being, Hobbies and Achievements. (105 words)

Introduction

This research evaluated when people are at their happiest by using a qualitative research method to conduct an interview to gain a better understanding of people's opinion on happiness. Most people main purpose in life is to find happiness in everything that they do, when people talk about happiness they relate it to pleasure of a particular moment in their life, or attaining a set goal, pleasure in some ways is a part of happiness but it is not the meaning of happiness. Happiness according to Peterson (2006). Is a very complex aspect of positive psychology, there are different traditional theories for happiness, the way each person measures happiness and its implications differs from one person to another. Perhaps some people thinks if they are financially secure, own a big house or car will make them happy, according to psychologist happy people are those that are not focussed on

their set goals but instead the people that are involved in the presence of the moment. (Wiederman, 2007). There are different routes to achieving a happy life, according to Seligman (2002). People need at least one route to attain a full potential happiness for them to accomplish their desire. The definition of happiness in a scientific aspect of subjective well-being, it is the feeling of satisfaction and affective balance for an individual. (Joseph & Linley, 2006).

Happiness entails a lot of other things apart from personal important goals that an individual might have set for themselves. Different experimental studies found out that happiness is connected to different desirable benefits that occurs in favour of an individual but because people compare themselves to others it creates an engender unhappiness (Lyubomirsky, 2005). But if happiness is strongly pursued, it can increase the chances for a person to fully attain such desire, especially for an extroverted personality, psychologist suggested that extroverts are happier people (Mauss, Tamir, Anderson, & Savino, 2011). This therefore leads to the research question when are people at their happiest? According to the study carried out by Lymbomirsky (2005). It revealed a positive correlation between happiness and success, not that success brings happiness but rather successful people tends to be happier than people that are not successful. It is important to consider individual differences when discussing happiness, because it is a common issue that arises when we generalise what happiness means.

There are different methods to measure what makes people happy but best and common method used on this topic question is to conduct a qualitative research using a semi structured interview schedule, this method will enable <https://assignbuster.com/qualitative-research-when-people-are-at-their-happiest/>

the researchers to gain personal understanding of the participant's happiest moments and also it will allow them to consider individual differences on what makes them happy. (452 words)

Method200

In this study there were two participants one male and one female who took part in a semi structured interview that lasted for approximately fifteen minute, the interview was conducted at a convenient location for both parties involved in the research, a tape recorder was used to take note. All ethical guidelines were followed and a detailed information form was given to the participant, also participants were told that the information provided will be confidential and recorded to be transcribed and analysed. The participant gave a verbal consent to carry out the interview after the research read out the information forms, at the end of the interview all participants were provided a debrief form that includes the details of the researchers in order for the participants to contact them if they have any further questions after the interview. They were also told that they can withdraw from the research at any time. Thematic analysis and a first order coding was used to transcribe and identify patterns that were formed in the data, this further enabled the researchers to analyse the themes that emerged from the data and through this they were able to explore the data in detail, this also enabled a thorough assessment to be carried out, and subsequently able to identify the themes and sub-themes that emerged before analysing the data (Kvale, 2007). (223 words)

Analysis and Discussion

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The main goal of this study is to analyse the interview that was carried out to assess participant's state of happiness, there were two participants and I will analyse and discuss the different response to the same questions that were asked by the interviewer. It emerged that people's view of happiness are different, we live in a world where happiness means different things to different people, some people are very materialistic, but some are not. Unfortunately material possessions does not bring happiness all the time. Due to individual life-style choices consequently have an impact on how we experience the world. Some of the targets that we set for ourselves can affect the way we experience the world and the level of happiness we experience. Thus from this research it is obvious that accomplishment and fulfilment are very important to peoples life. From the literature review psychologist have found out that when we focus on fulfilling this set goals we will more or less deny the processes of achieving the full potential happiness. Due to the rise of anxiety and stress levels from the pursuit of accomplishing this goals and to achieve their desires in life, therefore creates issues with the well-being, this happens most especially when it involves personal benefits (Wiederman, 2007).

From the interview the most occurring theme was how the participants value their relationships with other people most especially families and friends. It is important to relate our source of happiness with other people. It is hard to see an isolated person who would say that they are completely happy (Wiederman, 2007). In this study wedding day seems to be the top of what makes people happy, the two participants also recognised that when they

had their children was one of their happiest moment, this confirmed that we all need other people in order to attain a full potential happiness.

There have been series of sequence that emerged during this research on when are people at their happiest? The two participants that took part in this study talked about their state of happiness, the interview schedule had six questions, and one of the example of the questions presented to the participants was: what does happiness mean to you? (See Appendix B).

There were four key themes that emerged from the analysed data they are, Relationship, Well-being, Hobbies and Achievements.

Theme One: Relationship

This is the most salient theme that emerged from this study, ' Relationship' was severally referred to by the participant across different questions that was asked. The theme has different aspect to it, with sub-heading as: relationship with family and relationship with other people. Through this two sub-headings the main theme emerged. The sub-heading of relationship with family and others include comments from participants regarding how they take family life serious and also how they value there relationships with other people, both participants were immersed with happiness when they are with their families and friends. An example of the Relationship theme is this comment from participant one:

“ I enjoy having people around me, because as a family I am a father with 3 children they are the most important part of my life and seeing them with

my wife around and healthy always makes me feel content and happy”

(Appendix D. line 009 – 012).

“ I like to be around my friends and families to share my happiness.

Spending time with them also adds to my happiness” (Appendix E. Line 038 –

040)

Theme Two: Well-being

From the above theme on relationship and the quotations from the participants, ‘ Well-being’ manifested as another important theme in the data. The participant relate his physical and spiritual well-being as what makes him happy, there were two sub theme for Well-being and they are social well-being and physical well-being. The participant’s view of happiness is not in one angle rather it was seen in different realm. The quotation was from participants 1 interview.

“ Personally I think happiness is a complete compendium which include my state of mind which is how I feel and it involved both my physical state and my spiritual state must all be in tune (in a good form) in order for me to be fully happy.” (Appendix D, Line 031 – 035).

Theme Three: Achievements

This theme came about from the sub-heading of goals, education, marriage and having children. The two participants discussed a lot about achieving their set goals and getting through university had boosted their happiness, but the achievements that stand out for the two participants was getting married and having children. From the literature review in the introduction <https://assignbuster.com/qualitative-research-when-people-are-at-their-happiest/>

section we can see what psychologist says about people that set goals in order to achieve happiness. An example for the Achievement theme was from participant 2:

“ Getting married and being a beautiful bride is something that I wanted as a little girl it was almost my first childhood dream. I was like a princess for the day.” (Appendix E, Line 051 – 055).

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” Feeling that you are doing what you want to do and also achieve your goals.” (Appendix E, Line 033 – 034).

Theme Four: Hobbies

And the last theme was titled Hobbies, this theme was created to back up how people releases their daily stress (for instance stress from work or studies) in order to keep the level of happiness at the base-line will reduce anxieties that leads to stress, because people that are constantly stress are more likely to be unhappy. An example for the Hobbies theme was from the interview of participant 2:

“ I like to go for a run. This is what I enjoy it relaxes me and also I like to be fit. Especially as a nurse the work can be very stressful and demanding. I have to be on my feet long day. I enjoy running in the park not on the street though.” (Appendix E, Line 075 – 080).

Reflexive Analysis250

During this research I might have impacted on the quality of the interview because of my health condition at the time it was carried out. For the period of the interview I was time conscious mainly because I do not want to over or under interview the participant, this might be due to the fact that it was my first time carryout an interview and also the layout of the questions for the interview could have been somehow expanded to enable the participant to think better in depth about their state of happiness. While I was carrying out the analysis I had a headache which made me grumpy, this might have impacted on the direction of this analysis. It is possible that someone else would approach the research in a different way depending on their mood and well-being. And in future I will create a better layout of questions to enable better understanding for the participants, which will cause less tension for me and therefore create a better experience for me and the participant. At some point during the interview session there were some silence's that I found a bit uncomfortable, and also when the participant was talking about his sexual life, about how he loves having sex and it enables him to be more relaxed. But overall I had a great experience during this research. This interview has made me to realise that money cannot buy you happiness, and also that people are more likely to be happy when they achieve their aim in life. (256 words)

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