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## **Leisure and contentment- A ignored component in modern times**

**Aditya Priyamtrivedi**  
**PhD Research Scholar**  
**Dept. Of Anthropology**  
**University of Lucknow, lucknow.**  
**Email ID-bigshot208@gmail.com**

### Abstract:

The present paper investigates the entire inter-relationship between leisure and happiness of the today's digital era. Both Leisure and happiness are the sides of same coin and are interlinked with each other. This paper also discovers the factors affecting the happiness of people and how leisure plays an important role in physical and mental well-being and happiness of modern people. Every culture in the world has divided waking hours of a human day into "formal" working hours, and "leisure hours" where they are not formally required to be "productively" engaged. Despite work being considered the most important predictor of happiness (a world database of happiness reports 585 correlations between work and happiness but only 91 correlations between leisure and happiness), research has often shown that leisure is as important for happiness and productivity as work. All work and no play is certainly known to make us dull people.

Keyword: leisure, Happiness, Digital Era

### Introduction

Happiness is thought to depend on leisure; for we are busy that we may have leisure, and make war that we may live in a peace-Aristotle.

Leisure, according to Pieper, is a mental and spiritual attitude. It is not laziness, rather an inner silence that enables one to see reality. One is able to apprehend the world, to encounter parts of reality that we often miss in our daily toil. Leisure is also a "contemplative celebration," a harmony between oneself and the rest of creation. Finally, it is not a mere break from work. Rather, it is done for its own sake. It affirms us in our humanity and is part of what is meant flourish as human beings, to be whole. Leisure is a life domain that plays significant role in an individual's life overall happiness. Therefore, it only seems appropriate that on international day of happiness i.e. happiness day to present some of the research on the relationship between leisure and happiness. Mostly, happiness is defined as feeling good, enjoying life and wanting the feeling to be maintained (Layard, 2005). In the last decade, there has been a proliferation of research related to happiness (e.g. positive psychology movement). The popularity of books such as *The Happiness Project* and *Happier at Home* along with the introduction of the magazine *Live Happy* demonstrate a growth in our desire to explore concepts related to happiness and / or find, increase, or maintaining individual happiness.

We are living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century where the outbreak of information and technology has played a vital role in less mental peace and happiness.

Choose your leisure activities carefully- The type of activity you participate in matters- different leisure activities have differing impacts on happiness. Wang and Wong (2011a)

found six activities—shopping, reading books, attending cultural events, getting together with relatives, listening to music, and attending sporting events - were associated with higher levels of happiness. They also found that more time spent on the internet decreased the probability of an individual feeling “very happy” and increased the likelihood that an individual feeling “not at all happy”.

**Focus on quality leisure not quantity**- Since so many of feel time pressure in today's busy world, this next research finding may be promising. While you might like to have more time to engage in leisure, at least one study has found that the quantity of leisure is not as important as other aspects of leisure such as the satisfaction one derives from leisure activities and the meaning of leisure time (e.g., time with family; time to connect with others). Individuals who feel that their leisure activities facilitate the opportunity to be themselves- to be authentic- and help them to strengthen relationships with others tend to report greater happiness (Wang and Wong, 2011b). Therefore, focusing on ensuring one has quality leisure experiences may be more important to one's happiness than trying to secure more leisure time.

**Take vacation time and anticipate the vacation.** In a recent study, Happy people reported taking more holiday trips in a one year time frame. Holiday trips boost happiness- at least in the short term (Nawijn & Veenhoven, 2011) while on vacation, people are happier in then they are in their everyday lives and the greatest increase in happiness tend to be during the trip. However, two weeks after returning, that happiness boost disappears suggesting the effect on happiness is relative short-term. Also important is the idea of anticipation. Those who more strongly anticipate their holiday/vacation (e.g., thought about it, researched, planned and prepared) had higher level of happiness than those who and anticipated to a lesser degree (Jagger, 2009).

**Leave work out of your leisure.** When you are having leisure time-taking that dog for a walk, enjoying dinner with a friend, watching a movie - avoid thinking about work. Research suggests that individuals who frequently think about work in their free time tend to be less happy than others (Wang and Wong, 2011b).

**Happiness can be bought from money-** It does seem, however, that happiness depends on what you are spending money on (De Leire & Kalil, 2010). Researchers have found that consuming leisure or material goods that facilitate leisure ( e.g., movie tickets, gym membership, trips and vacations, sports events and performing arts, material related to hobbies, athletic equipment) is positively related to happiness . Consuming other material goods such as car, appliances, computers, clothing and televisions is unrelated to happiness. Engaging in some of the leisure experiences identified above afford opportunities to reduce isolation and offers opportunities for social connection through social networks.

**Maintain your participation in networks-time physical activity-** Your levels of happiness can

have an influence on your mood status. A recent study by Wang et al.(2012 ) found that a change in activity status from being inactive to being active could protect against unhappiness over time.

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Technology is constantly improving our productivity, efficiency and communication- at least in theory. But one thing it's not doing is making us feel reliably happier. But it doesn't have to be this way. When used well, technology has the potential to enhance, rather than diminish human happiness. Recognising that technology will continue to evolve in form and function, we need to know how to navigate the future to achieve a better balance between our gadgets, productivity and well beings.

#### Objectives:

- To study the interrelationship between leisure and happiness.
- To discover the factors affecting the happiness of people.
- To analyse how leisure plays a key role in lives of people in modern era.

#### Methodology

The entire paper is based on secondary sources like different reports of NGOs and surveys conducted by Indian Government and private agencies. Various journals and articles have been contributed in the findings of this paper.

#### Discussion and findings:

From the above discussion we concluded that both leisure and happiness are inter-related to each other as leisure is the free time we spend on for oneself. With the rise of digital era and technology the space between the healthy pleasure is filling by unhealthy routine of technological use. People spend most of their leisure time on smartphones and digital world due to which there is a outburst of various health related issues, depression, loneliness, migraine. People are getting detached from their family responsibilities and healthy environment is mostly avoided by the people of modern era. Family timing and leisure activities are less seen among people. Due to rise of digital world a generation gap is observed between young and old generation as a result of which nuclear families are mostly preferred among the modern people. There is clash of ideas and thoughts between old and new generations. Happiness in leisure time is getting less as compared to previous days.

People are becoming more materialistic than real. Money plays an important role in today's digital people's lives. Leisure activities and happiness is highly influenced by the money status of people.

## Conclusion

Leisure provides individuals an opportunity to receive relief from stress, to socialize with others, to examine personal values, and to fulfill goals. Leisure reinforces an individual's happiness. In this paper, we explore the statistical link between pleasure and happiness. As the concept of leisure is multifaceted, we measure leisure in different ways and study the association between individual happiness and four measures of leisure: leisure time, leisure activities, leisure's roles in self-fulfillment and social interaction, and leisure's relation to work and other spheres of life. However, the quantity of leisure is not as important as the other aspects of leisure- leisure's role in self-fulfillment and social interaction; and leisure's relation to work and other spheres of life. By rethinking when, where, why and how you use technology, you will not only be able to influence your own well-being but also help shape the future of your community.

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