

Socioeconomic Status and Life Satisfaction in Cross-Cultural Perspective: The Elderly in Japan and India

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Abstract

Aging of population is one of the most significant global phenomena of the 21st century. The issue of aging is experienced by all the societies of the world. This is particularly alarming for Japan and India due to the higher share of elderly in the population. This paper examines distinct socio economic factors, level of life satisfaction and the factors associated with the life satisfaction of elderly in Japan and India, two nations with vastly diverse cultures. This study provides substantial empirical information with respect to the socioeconomic condition and the level of life satisfaction of elderly in the two countries. The findings revealed the better socioeconomic status of Japanese elderly compared to the Indians. However, the level of life satisfaction was higher among the Indian elderly than their Japanese counterpart. Country differences in the factors associated with the life satisfaction of elderly are documented.

Key words: Elderly: Socio economic status: Life satisfaction

Aging of population is one of the most significant characteristics of the 21st century and is one of the most pressing issues faced by all regions of the world. The issue of aging of population is of great concern particularly for Japan and India. Addressing the issues of elderly in their socioeconomic arena and factors related to their satisfaction with life has significant research implications. Japan provides an interesting setting for the study as it has the highest longevity in the world. By, 2010, there were 29.29 million elderly (65 years and older) constituting 23.1% of the total population in Japan marking record highs both in number and percentage .Japanese have the highest life expectancy in the world (86.39 years for women and 79.64 years for men in 2010) (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 2011).

India is the second populous country in the world, with 99.87 million persons above 60 years of age, constituting 8.3% of the total population (Census of India, 2011). To understand the features of aging at the global level, comparative cross-country study is an essential tool. It helps us to achieve a better understanding of others and that of ourselves against different cultural and social setup. It is known that the nature of issues, socioeconomic and cultural background of elderly in Japan and India are different. Only comparative studies carried out in different social and cultural settings could help to understand the similarities and differences of human behaviour against these back grounds and to come up with innovative strategies for human welfare while learning from each other. It is extremely intriguing and important in the changing social environment of the present world, to acquire, understand and expand the knowledge of people of various social set up and cultures through comparative research and thus broadening the possibilities of social research towards gaining newer insights into various phenomena. The present cross country study attempts to realize the same. Comparative study like the present one is highly valuable to balance the gap between a developed and a developing country because greater possibilities for evolving novel ideas for improvement could be explored through such efforts.

Factors affecting the life satisfaction of elderly operate at distinctive socioeconomic and cultural factors of individuals in their life course. These factors could exert a cumulative effect on the life satisfaction of elderly. Realizing this, the present study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To study the socioeconomic background of elderly in Japan and India
2. To analyze the level of life satisfaction among the elderly in both the countries
3. To find out the factors associated with the life satisfaction of elderly

The areas for the study were selected using multi stage random sampling technique. Out of the eight regions in Japan, Kanto region was selected to conduct the study. Out of the 7 prefectures in Kanto region, three prefectures, namely- Tokyo, Saitama and Chiba were selected using random sampling technique. Each prefecture comprised of wards ranging from 6-23 and from that, two wards were selected randomly to draw the sample. In India, out of 28 states, the state of Kerala was selected to carry out the study. Out of the 14 districts in Kerala, three districts, namely –Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Alappuzha were selected randomly. Each district comprised of wards ranging from 50-100. From each of the three districts, two wards were selected randomly to draw the sample. From both countries, 50 respondents (25 males and 25 females) were identified from each ward using systematic random sampling technique from the voter's list of respective wards. Therefore, the sample consisted of 600 elderly aged 60 years and above ie-300 (150 males and 150 females) from each country.

Structured interview schedule was used to study the socioeconomic back ground of the respondents. To analyze the socioeconomic back ground of the respondents, the variables examined were age group, educational qualifications, employment status, financial independence, frequency of interaction, convoy composition (social network), social support and leisure activities. Life satisfaction index was developed to assess the level of life satisfaction of elderly. Life satisfaction was assessed under seven life domains namely- personality factors, living environment, family and social relationship, economic condition, health, leisure and personal fulfillment.

Results and discussion

1. Socioeconomic background of the respondents

Sixty percent of respondents from Japan and 54% from India belonged to the age group of 60 -69 years (Table1). Highly significant difference was observed on the educational levels of respondents in the two countries. Among Indian respondents, 60% had education between 7th to 9th standard. Among Japanese, 30% had bachelor's degree. Japanese elderly had better educational qualifications compared to India (Table 2). Among Indian respondents, 26% and among Japanese 43% were employed (Table 3). Further breakdown of employment status revealed that 26% of males and 11% of females joined a new job after retirement in Japan. Thus, it is evident that the employment rate of elderly respondents is high in Japan compared to India. In Japan, many elderly keep working even after retirement.

Financial independence was high among Japanese compared to Indians (66% vs. 40%). Significant difference was observed between the two countries on this respect (Table 4). Higher proportion Indian respondents (78%) interacted often with children compared to Japanese (30%). Interaction with relatives was more among Indians than Japanese (65% vs. 29%) (Table 5).

1.1. Convoy composition

To capture the respondent's social network, a concentric circle diagram developed by Kahn and Antonucci (1980) was used. The circle consisted of three concentric circles with the word "you" (respondent) written in the core of the circle. The circle depicts different levels of closeness of convoys to the focal person. Each person is presumed to be surrounded and moving through life by a convoy, a set of people, to whom the person is related through exchange of support. This convoy structure is the social network which fulfills various functions of social support to the focal person. In the inner circle, the respondents were asked to list the people 'so close and important that it is hard to imagine life without them'. In the middle circle - 'people to whom they may not feel quite that close but are still important to them'. In the outer circle - 'people who may not be that close as people in the inner and middle circle, but still should be placed in their personal network'. As per the convoy composition (fig 1 &2), the following observations have been arrived at:

Inner Circle

- *Similarity* : - Mainly includes spouse and children in both countries
- *Difference*: -Share of siblings and friends is more among Japanese.
-Share of grandchildren is more pronounced among Indians.

Middle Circle

- *Similarity*: - Include relatives, children and siblings in both countries.
- *Difference*: - Share of friends among Japanese is predominant compared to India.

Outer Circle:

-Mainly comprised of friends and relatives for both countries

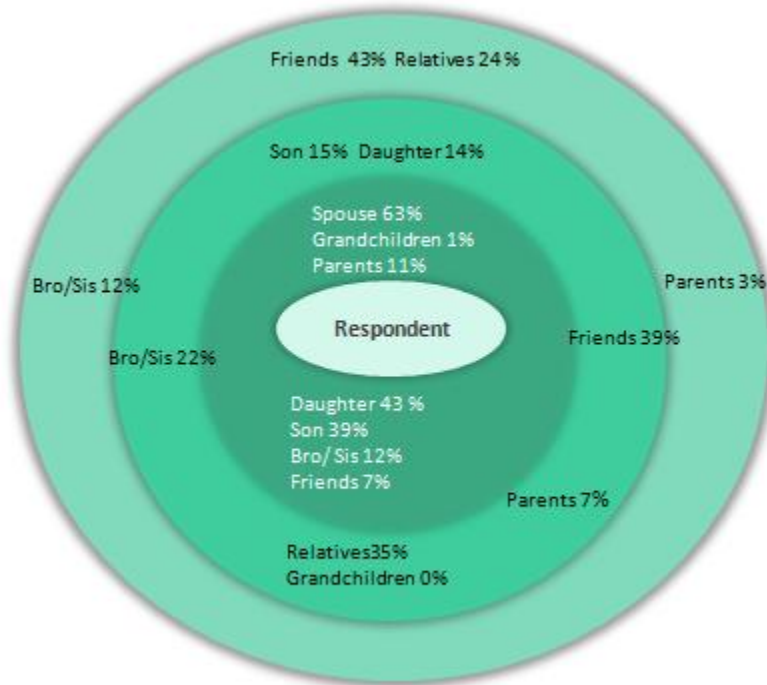


Figure 1 Convoy composition Japan

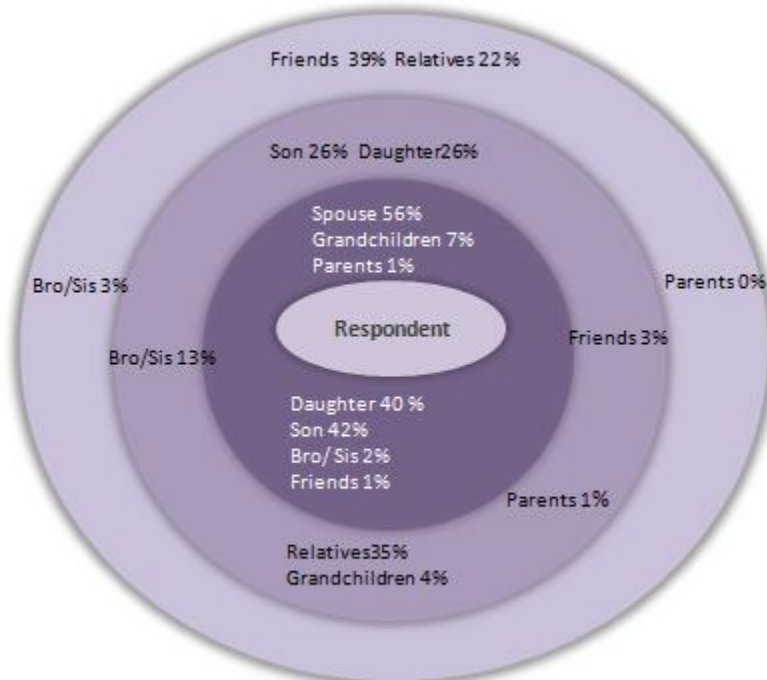


Figure-2 Convoy composition -India

Significant difference was observed in the network size between the two countries. The average number of convoys constituting the social network among Japanese far exceeded that of Indian counterpart in all the circles (Table 6). Findings by Jayashree (2000) also revealed that spouse and children are the closest convoys among the Indian elderly. Hiroko and Antonucci(2003) observed that spouse and children constitute the closest relationship in the inner circle; sister and brother constituted leading share in the middle circle while friends constituted the outer circle of the personal network of Japanese elderly.

1.2. Social support

To examine the source specific social support of elderly, social support components conceptualized by Barrera and Ainlay (1983) were modified and used. The components studied were material aid, behavioral assistance, guidance; and psychological support. A closer look at the findings revealed the following:

Indian elderly received more support from children in most of the components of social support compared to Japanese. The difference was distinct in the items of 'material aid' 'behavioural assistance' and 'psychological support'. Japanese elderly received support from wide range including one's friends and relatives apart from spouses and children particularly in items related to psychological support and guidance. The share of friends in providing psychological support and guidance was distinctively high among Japanese elderly. Majority of Japanese elderly were self sufficient in meeting the 'material aid' and 'behavioural assistance' indicating their sense of independence in these arenas. From the results, (Table 7) it can be inferred that the role of friendship in the life of Japanese elderly is distinct and that of children among Indian elderly.

Dubey et al (2011) indicated that majority of Indian elderly got material support from their family members. In a study by Irudaya Rajan et al (2004), it was seen that children followed by spouse provided the major support in material aid among the Indian elderly. Yamato (2004) observed that majority of elderly Japanese would not depend on children financially and majority of them were self reliant for livelihood. Nobe (2005) found that neighbours or friends generally gave assistance that compensated the most, when emotional support from other sources was unavailable to elderly in Japan.

1.3. Leisure activities

Country differentials in pursuing specified leisure activities are sharply defined as per Table 8. The mean scores of all leisure activities were higher among Japanese compared to India except for one activity that is 'interacting with grandchildren' (India 1.08, Japan 0.45). The leading activity in both countries was 'watching television' (rank 1) with the highest mean scores (Japan, 1.54 and India, 1.39). The activity of 'interacting with grandchildren' ranked 'two' among Indian respondents while it ranked 'eleven' among Japanese. This clearly indicates that Indian elderly maintains close ties with grandchildren than Japanese. The difference in the mean scores obtained for the activities 'hobbies' (Japan- 1.16; India- 0.11) and 'reading' (Japan 1.42; India 0.8) is distinct indicating the higher involvement in hobbies and reading among Japanese.

2. Level of life Satisfaction

Significant difference was observed on the level of life satisfaction of elderly in Japan and India. Level of satisfaction was high among Indian elderly than Japanese (78% v/s 70%). More females in India (96%) were satisfied with life compared to Japanese females (74%) (Table 9). Irrespective of lower socioeconomic status of elderly in India, the higher satisfaction among them compared to the Japanese elderly is an interesting observation. This is in line with the popular 'Easterlin Paradox' which created growing interest among the economists on the topic of happiness and economic condition of individuals. Easterlin (1974) observed that the self reported happiness is same across rich and poor countries and that economic growth does not raise well-being and as countries get richer, they do not get happier. Easterlin (2001) also observed that over the life cycle, aspirations grow along with income and undercut the favorable effect of income growth on happiness.

The result of the present study is indicative of the intrinsic nature of life satisfaction, possibly resulting from the differences of individual perception of one's own life conditions. The frequent interactions with children and grand children that closely embed the elderly into the family may define the higher satisfaction among the elderly in India. A further examination of characteristics of life satisfaction reveals the following.

In life domains for Indian elderly, highest satisfaction was reported for 'personal fulfillment' (77%) and the lowest for 'economic condition' (41%). In old age, a sense of fulfillment of completion of major responsibilities of life could provide a sense of freedom which in turn could augment their satisfaction.

Among Japanese, the highest satisfaction was for 'living environment' (84%) and lowest for 'leisure' and 'economic condition' (36% each) (Table 10).

4. Factors associated with life satisfaction of elderly

1. Education

Significant association was found between education and life satisfaction of elderly. Respondents with higher levels of education had higher levels of life satisfaction than those with lower education in both countries (Table 11). Education may allow people to have a better understanding of the aging process and help to have better adaptability to the changing environments. Education could also have a positive effect on health through better knowledge in health care. Similar findings were observed in studies conducted by Kumar et al (2005) and Mudey et. al (2011). They revealed that education is an important variable contributing significantly towards the wellbeing and quality of life among Indian elderly. However, Rayanagoudar et. al (2001) showed a non-significant difference in life satisfaction according to the elderly people's educational level.

2. Employment status

Significant association was observed between employment status and life satisfaction among Indian respondents (Table 12). In India, those who were presently 'not working' were satisfied with life than those who were 'presently working'. Working after retirement is not a common phenomenon in India. Elderly in general would prefer to lead a relaxed life after retirement. The possibility of stress associated with work could be one of the reasons for the lower levels of satisfaction of 'working' elderly in India. However, Jain and Sharma (2004) indicated that productive engagement in work play a vital role in the quality of life of Indian elderly people. Tada et. al (2003) also noted that engagement in work is related to the life satisfaction among the Japanese elderly.

3. Financial independence

Significant association was found between financial independence and life satisfaction among the respondents of India and Japan (Table 13). Among the Japanese those who were financially independent were satisfied with life (76%) than those who were dependent (59%). However, in India, satisfaction was more among those elderly in spite of being financially dependent (83%) than those who were independent (76%). This observation is an intriguing one and indicates that the economic status has a stronger impact on the life satisfaction among the Japanese and not among the Indians. Among the Japanese, the higher levels of satisfaction among those who were financially independent could be due the fact that financial independence allow greater fulfillment of material aspirations. In India, being financially dependent on the children in old age is a culturally accepted norm. The elderly in India generally expect their children to look after them in old age, the absence of which could lead to lower satisfaction in the cultural context of India. Another explanation is that the Indian elderly may derive greater satisfaction by attaching more values to other factors like close family knit and exchange of support through it more than their economic condition.

The finding indicates the cultural differences in the values and perception of individuals about one's economic status in the two nations and the resultant differences in its impact on the level of satisfaction among them. However, Kumar et. al (2005) and Rayanagoudar et. al (2001) found that life satisfaction and wellbeing was positively and significantly related with the economic status among Indian elderly. In Japan, Shirai et. al (2006) and Tsutsui et. al (2001) also found that financial condition was positively associated with the life satisfaction among the Japanese elderly.

4. Convoy composition

Significant association was observed between number of convoys and life satisfaction of elderly (Table-14). Those with higher number of people in the convoy circle had higher levels of satisfaction in both countries. Higher numbers of convoys indicate that more people are available for support and sharing. This ensures greater security in times of need. Convoys are especially important in old age when physical and mental needs escalate.

Demura et. al (2001) also observed that the satisfaction level was related to the number of convoys among Japanese elderly. Ho et. al (2003) indicated that relationship with others was related to life satisfaction among the Japanese elderly. Shirai et. al (2006) found that life satisfaction tended to be associated with family relations among the Japanese elderly. Das and Satsangi (2007) found a significant positive effect of companionship of spouse upon life satisfaction of elderly Indians.

5. Social support

Significant association was found between social support and life satisfaction of elderly (Table 15). Those who received more support had higher levels of life satisfaction in both countries. Social support assures greater security and assurance at times of adversities. Elderly person's levels of satisfaction could be elevated when he/she receives caring support from their convoys. This is particularly valuable in old age when one experiences increased physical and mental deterioration.

The finding is in line with the results of the studies carried out by Das and Satsangi (2008) and Shyam and Devi (2006) in India. They found significant positive correlation between social support, life satisfaction and subjective well being among elderly Indians. Panda (2005) also observed that elderly women with good support from their children were satisfied with life than others. It was noted that relational variable rather than economic indicators might be stronger in influencing the life satisfaction among aged women. Similar result was observed by Ishizawa (2004) and Wang et.al (2002) in Japan. They pointed out that life satisfaction is influenced by social support from others among Japanese elderly. However, Kim et .al (1999) reported that receiving support was not significantly associated with life satisfaction among Japanese elderly.

6. Leisure activities

Significant association was found between leisure activities and life satisfaction of elderly (Table16). Those with higher involvement in leisure activities had higher levels of life satisfaction in both countries .According to Shah et al (2007), recreation associated with leisure activities have therapeutic value as it helps an individual ailing person to preserve and maintain mobility, social interaction and mental agility. Both recreation and leisure thus have the effect of enhancing one's quality of life.

Findings of Jain and Sharma (2004) also indicated that active engagement in various activities contributes to enhance psychological and emotional well being and in turn a better quality of life among Indian elderly. Tada et. al (2003) expressed that involvement in various hobbies and other activities in the community and family were important for life satisfaction among the Japanese elderly. Matsuo et. al (2003) reported that in Japan, the elderly who have participated in various activities were more happy and satisfied with their life than those who have not participated in activities. Okamoto (2008) found that personal as well as socially related activities were positively associated with life satisfaction among Japanese elderly. Ishizawa and Chogahara (2000) also found that leisure satisfaction was related to life satisfaction in Japanese elderly.

Implications of the study

The investigation was a comparative cross-country study of the elderly in Japan and India, the two largest democracies in Asia and culturally diverse countries. Both Japan and India are experiencing rapid aging of population. The study attempted to assess the socioeconomic back ground of the elderly, the level of life satisfaction and the factors associated with the life satisfaction of elderly.

The study revealed that the Japanese elderly were in a better position in socio economic status compared to their Indian counterpart. Japanese elderly had higher educational qualifications compared to Indian elderly. In addition, higher proportion of Japanese elderly was employed and financially independent compared to Indians. In Japan, working after retirement is a distinctive feature. In 1971, the government enacted the Law Concerning Stabilization of Employment of Older persons, the most significant initiative to the support of older people by the Japanese government. Moreover, the unique model of Silver Human Resource Center (SHRC) by the Japanese government for the employment promotion of elderly is worth mentioning. "Fully subsidized by the national and municipal governments, each SHRC chapter provides community-based employment opportunities for local residents age 60 and older who seek such non regular employments as temporary, contract, part-time or other forms of paid work"(Williamson and Higo, 2007). These efforts by the Japanese government are credible models to persuade to promote the employment of elderly in countries like India.

The findings of the study revealed greater disparities in the social status of elderly in the two countries in terms of frequency of interaction, social support, convoy composition, and involvement in leisure activities. The convoy composition revealed the closer ties with children and spouse in both countries. Additionally, Japanese elderly maintained closer ties with friends and Indian elderly with grandchildren.

With regard to receipt of social support, the significant role of friendship in the lives of Japanese and that of children among Indian elderly was evident. The closer ties with friends as revealed in the convoy composition and higher role of friends in the social support components indicates that friends are gaining value in the life of Japanese elderly. However, the role of children in extending support in all the components of social support in the lives of Indian elderly was evident from the findings. On the contrary, the support of children in the lives of Japanese elderly particularly in areas of 'material aid' and 'behavioural assistance' was rather weak compared to the elderly in India.

The disparity between the two countries was distinct in the leisure activities. Japanese involved in a range of leisure activities more than the Indian elderly. Moore (2008) observed that 'a key phenomenon that has emerged in the context of population aging is the rise in importance of communal leisure activities among Japanese elderly. These leisure and learning communities help 'mutual strangers' in Japan's aging society to 'construct a human network'. Such communal leisure groups are not common in India.

However, the findings showed that the level of life satisfaction among the Indian elderly was higher compared to the Japanese elderly despite their lower socio economic status. The findings also established the association between distinct socioeconomic factors such as education, financial independence, convoy composition, social support, leisure activities and life satisfaction of elderly in both the countries.

The results considerably demonstrated that even though the Japanese were better in social and economic status, the overall life satisfaction level was lower compared to Indian elderly. This is an interesting observation as this leads to further deliberation of the role of other factors for the lower levels of satisfaction among Japanese. The level of satisfaction related to one's 'personal fulfillment', 'economic condition' and 'leisure' was markedly low among Japanese respondents (56%, 36% and 36%) compared to India (77%, 41% and 51%), thus leading to lower levels of overall life satisfaction among them. Even though Japanese elderly pursued wide range of leisure activities, the elderly in India reported higher levels of leisure satisfaction (36%vs.51%). 'Interacting with grandchildren' was one of the leading leisure activities among Indian elderly. This activity might be enhancing the old age experience to higher level of satisfaction while keeping the elderly closely embedded in the family through intergenerational interactions. This clearly indicates the influence of cultural differences and its impact on the life satisfaction across nations. The lower level of satisfaction among Japanese on domains of economic condition, leisure and personal fulfillment suggests that life satisfaction could also be affected by the 'level of expectations', and 'wants' of individuals from the respective life domains, which rest upon the sense of values and aspirations attached to it.

What the study adds to knowledge

- Studies on the convoy composition of elderly and its effect on life satisfaction in Japan and India are scanty. The study also offered greater insights into the differences and similarities in the structure of convoy composition of elderly in both countries. The source specific social support of elderly was examined in great depth. This helped in identifying the major sources of support available to elderly in the two countries, the understanding of which has significant research implications.
- The findings indicated that one of the foremost lessons that could be learned from Japan is to ensure economic security in old age. The practice of being in the labor force even after retirement is a credible example to maintain economic independence and social status of elderly.
- The higher involvement in range of leisure activities among the Japanese elderly was observed in the present study. The findings clearly demonstrated the positive effect of leisure activities on life satisfaction. This indicates the importance of pursuing range of leisure activities for the well-being of elderly.
- The significance of convoys in the life of elderly for receiving support to be of benefit in old age was established in the study. The findings revealed positive effect on the levels of life satisfaction as the number of convoys increased in both the countries.

- The self-reliance of Japanese elderly is indicated in both economic and self-care arenas. An independent outlook in the day-to-day affairs among the elderly may help to maintain higher autonomy and individuality.
- Findings from India revealed the higher frequency of interactions with children and grandchildren among the elderly. This will have both psychological and social benefits; in that it will keep elderly more closely embedded in the family through the joy of intergenerational exchange and increased chances of receipt of support through such interactions as well as for combating loneliness in old age. Promotion of the inter-generational solidarity with the goal of improving familial cohesion and strengthening the institution of family could play critical role in addressing various socio-economic issues of elderly.
- From the findings, it is evident that support from children among Japanese was distinctively low compared to India. This observation has significant social and economic implication for the elderly as well as for the government, as care of elderly has become a crucial social issue in Japan. Interventions into securing higher family based support for elderly is always recommended. Community awareness on supporting one's parents should be propagated, as this will lead to the solidarity of family ties, which is the basic unit of a stable society. This could lead to higher levels of satisfaction among the Japanese elderly through the joy of sharing and support from the family members. As the forerunner of aging society and challenged with dealing issues on providing social security to elderly, this idea will be of great significance and serve as a social capital in Japanese society.

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Table 1 Age group of respondents

Age Group	INDIA			JAPAN		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
60 – 69	81 (54)	82 (55)	163 (54)	91 (61)	90 (60)	181 (60)
70 – 79	47 (31)	47 (31)	94 (31)	42 (28)	48 (32)	90 (30)
80+	22 (15)	21 (14)	43 (14)	17 (11)	12 (8)	29 (10)
Total	150	150	300	150	150	300

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 2 Educational qualifications

Education	INDIA			JAPAN		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Illiterate	20 (13)	7 (5)	27 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
7-9	107 (71)	74 (49)	181 (60)	27 (18)	32 (21)	59 (20)
10-12	12 (8)	42 (28)	54 (18)	54 (36)	33 (22)	87 (29)
Vocational school	1 (0.7)	2 (1)	3 (1)	20 (13)	10 (7)	30 (10)
Diploma	0	3 (2)	3 (1)	22 (15)	2 (1)	24 (8)
Bachelor's	6 (4)	18 (12)	24 (8)	25 (17)	64 (43)	89 (30)
Masters	1 (0.7)	4 (3)	5 (2)	2 (1)	9 (6)	11 (4)
Others	3 (2)	0	3 (1)	0	0	0
Total	150	150	300	150	150	300

*Chi square-8.24164E-32***
P-1
Level of significance-0.01

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 3 Employment status

Particulars	INDIA			JAPAN		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Employed	8(5)	22 (15)	30 (10)	21 (14)	17 (11)	38 (13)
Retired and joined a new Job	1 (0.7)	6 (4)	7 (2.34)	16 (11)	39 (26)	55 (18)
Self Employed	9 (6)	31 (21)	40 (13.34)	16 (11)	19 (13)	35 (12)
Retired	53 (35)	89 (59)	142 (47)	79 (53)	75 (50)	154 (51)
Never Employed	79 (53)	2 (1)	81 (27)	18 (12)	0	18 (6)
Total	150	150	300	150	150	300

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 4 Financial independence

Particulars	INDIA	JAPAN
Independent	121 (40)	198 (66)
Dependent	179 (60)	102 (34)
Total	300	300

*Chisquare-2.98279E-10***
Probability-0.99998622
Level of significance-0.01

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 5 Frequency of interaction

Particulars	INDIA			JAPAN		
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Never	Sometimes	Often
Children	32 (11)	33 (11)	235 (78)	107 (36)	104 (35)	89 (30)
Friends	4 (1)	151 (50)	145 (48)	15 (5)	186 (62)	99 (33)
Relatives	3 (1)	103 (34)	194 (65)	13 (4)	200 (67)	87 (29)
NA (no children)	17 (6)			57 (19)		
Total	300			300		

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 6 Convoy composition- Average number of people

Circles	INDIA			JAPAN		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Inner circle	1.3	1.6	1.5	2	1.9	2.0
Middle circle	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.7	1.6
Outer circle	0.5	0.6	0.5	1.1	1.7	1.4
All circles	3.0	3.4	3.2	4.5	5.3	4.9

*Chi square- 5.83704E-37***
Probability -1
Level of significance-0.01

Table 7 Receipt of source specific social support by respondents

Social support components	Spouse		Children		Friends		Relatives		Self	
	Japan	India	Japan	India	Japan	India	Japan	India	Japan	India
Material aid										
Financial support for emergency	125 (42)	62 (21)	40 (13)	207 (69)	1 (0.3)	6 (2)	10 (3)	8 (3)	218 (73)	98 (33)
Provide food and shelter when in need	126 (42)	118 (39)	36 (12)	169 (56)	4 (1)	4 (1)	16 (5)	8 (3)	219 (73)	57 (19)
Behavioral assistance										
Help with daily house work	134 (45)	111 (37)	34 (11)	128 (43)	1 (0.3)	2 (1)	9 (3)	20 (7)	193 (64)	41 (14)
Take to hospital when ill	71 (24)	46 (15)	38 (13)	196 (65)	8 (3)	7 (2)	7 (2)	11 (4)	230 (77)	96 (32)
Care when sick in bed	173 (58)	146 (49)	88 (29)	176 (59)	16 (5)	6 (2)	32 (11)	13 (4)	99 (33)	10 (3)
Psychological support										
Provide emotional support	154 (51)	149 (50)	91 (30)	138 (46)	106 (35)	10 (3)	88 (29)	21 (7)	63 (21)	6 (2)
Provide companionship	81(27)	169 (56)	41 (14)	108 (36)	128 (43)	20 (7)	41(14)	23 (8)	73 (24)	4 (1)
Listen when talked to	155 (52)	170 (57)	99 (33)	123 (41)	185 (62)	14 (5)	87 (29)	19 (6)	22 (7)	1 (0.3)
To take care	148 (49)	172 (57)	85 (28)	158 (53)	181 (60)	8 (3)	89 (30)	13 (4)	26 (9)	8 (3)
Provide feeling of security	157 (52)	171 (57)	122 (41)	174 (58)	127 (42)	13 (4)	89 (30)	12 (4)	30 (10)	6 (2)
Feels responsible for wellbeing	127 (42)	170 (57)	66 (22)	171 (57)	9 (3)	11 (4)	35 (12)	14(5)	138 (46)	5 (2)
Share interests and concerns	146 (49)	171 (57)	115 (38)	147 (49)	182 (61)	17 (6)	93 (31)	14 (5)	37 (12)	4 (1)
Guidance										
To consult when in trouble	166 (55)	138 (46)	99 (33)	82 (27)	117 (39)	25 (8)	101 (34)	36 (12)	32 (11)	3 (1)
To consult when physical condition is not good	173 (58)	153 (51)	109 (36)	133 (44)	87 (29)	25 (8)	79 (26)	30 (10)	24 (8)	1 (0.3)
Provide with timely advice and information on various matters	146 (49)	136 (45)	110 (37)	74 (25)	187 (62)	40 (13)	126 (42)	35 (12)	20 (7)	1 (0.3)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 8 Rank order of leisure activities

Activities	INDIA		JAPAN	
	Rank	Mean score	Rank	Mean score
Interacting with grand children	2	1.08	11	0.45
Watching television	1	1.39	1	1.54
Listening radio	5	0.49	5	0.97
Hobbies	7	0.11	3	1.16
Reading	4	0.8	2	1.42
Talking to friends	5	0.61	6	0.87
Go to movie	7	0.11	10	0.51
Travel and excursion	6	0.12	8	0.8
Rearing pet animals	8	0.07	9	0.54
Go to beach/park	8	0.07	7	0.81
Meeting friends	3	0.82	4	1.02
Others	9	0.05	12	0.01

Table 9 Life Satisfaction index

Particulars	INDIA			JAPAN		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Satisfied	144(96)	90 (60)	234 (78)	111 (74)	100 (67)	211 (70)
Moderately satisfied	6 (4)	59 (39)	65 (22)	36 (24)	47 (31)	83 (28)
Dissatisfied	0(0)	1(0.7)	1(0.3)	3(2)	3(2)	6(2)
Total	150	150	300	150	150	300
Chi square- 0.041117271** Probability- 0.99781 Level of significance- 0.01						

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 10 Sub group indices of life satisfaction

Life domains	INDIA			JAPAN		
	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Dissatisfied
Personality traits	218(73)	77(26)	5(2)	217(72)	72(24)	11(4)
Family/social relations	219(73)	61(20)	20(7)	220(73)	71(24)	9(3)
Economic condition	124(41)	121(40)	55(18)	109(36)	89(30)	102(34)
Living environment	203(68)	70(23)	27(9)	252(84)	36(12)	12(4)
Health condition	191(64)	93(31)	16(5)	182(61)	96(32)	22(7)
Leisure activities	154(51)	125(42)	21(7)	109(36)	91(30)	100(33)
Personal fulfilment	232(77)	67(22)	1(0.3)	168(56)	108(36)	24(8)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 11 Association between education and life satisfaction

INDIA					
Life Satisfaction					
Variable	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Dissatisfied	Chi-square	P
Education					
College level	31(89)	4(11)	0(0)	0.02993**	1
School level	203(77)	61(23)	1(0.38)		
JAPAN					
College level	132(86)	22(14)	0(0)	1.17025E-09**	1
School level	79(54)	61(42)	6(4)		
** significant at 0.01 level					

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 12 Association between employment status and life satisfaction

INDIA					
Life Satisfaction					
Variable	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Dissatisfied	Chi-square	P
Employment status					
Employed	46(60)	30(39)	1(1)	4.75187E-05**	0.999999
Not employed	188(84)	35(16)	0(0)		
JAPAN					
Employed	89(70)	37(29)	2(2)	0.94741	0.81397
Not employed	122(71)	46(27)	4(2)		
** significant at 0.01 level					

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 13 Association between financial independence and life satisfaction

INDIA					
Life Satisfaction					
Variable	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Dissatisfied	Chi-square	P
Financial independence					
Independent	85 (70)	36(30)	0(0)	0.04661**	0.99736
Dependent	149(83)	29(16)	1(1)		
JAPAN					
Independent	151(76)	44(22)	3(2)	6.71635E-27**	1
Dependent	60(59)	39(38)	3(3)		

** significant at 0.01 level

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 14 Association between convoy composition and life satisfaction

INDIA					
Life satisfaction					
Variable	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Dissatisfied	Chi square	P
Number of convoys					
One-three	144(72)	55(28)	1(0.5)	0.224935**	1
Four-six	78(78)	22(22)	0(0)		
JAPAN					
One-three	39(66)	17(29)	3(5)	0.085023**	1
Four-six	172(71)	66(27)	3(1)		

**-significant at 0.01level

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 15 Association between social support and life satisfaction

INDIA					
Life satisfaction					
Variable	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Dissatisfied	Chi square	P
Social support					
High	28(78)	7(19)	1(3)	0.003328**	1
Moderate-low	175(66)	89(34)	0(0)		
JAPAN					
High	50(76)	16(24)	0(0)	0.66310**	0.99989
Moderate-low	161(69)	67(29)	6(3)		

**-significant at 0.01level

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 16 Association between leisure activities and life satisfaction

INDIA					
Life satisfaction					
Variables	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Dissatisfied	Chi square	P
Leisure activities					
High	51(85)	9(15)	0(0)	0.86094**	0.99969
Moderate-low	183(76)	56(23)	1(0.42)		
JAPAN					
High	181(75)	57(24)	2(1)	0.00743**	1
Moderate-low	30(50)	26(43)	4(7)		

**-significant at 0.01level

Figures in parentheses denote percentage