

The Effects of Self-Perceived Intelligence on Life Satisfaction Differentiated by Gender

Research Questions

- Does life satisfaction level differ between people depending on their self-perceived intelligence?
- Does the association vary by gender?

Significance

- Life satisfaction is an important indicator of quality of life and well-being (Moksnes & Espnes, 2013).
- Life satisfaction can be influenced by self-esteem and the quality of interpersonal relationships (Kang, Shaver, Sue, Min, & Jing, 2003).

Background

- Self-perceived intelligence is one aspect of self-esteem (Moksnes & Espnes, 2013).
- Higher self-esteem is related to high life satisfaction (Moksnes & Espnes, 2013).
- Males have reported higher and more stable self-esteem levels and higher self-perceived intelligence than females (Palmer, Donaldson, & Stough, 2002).
- Personality trait differences account for gender differences in self-perceived intelligence (Furnham & Buchanon, 2005).

Hypothesis

- People with higher self-perceived intelligence will have a higher level of life satisfaction.
- The association will be greater for women than men.

Data and Sample

- National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health)
- Wave 3 (2001-2002) public data (N = 4882)
- U.S. young adults aged 18-28

Dependent Measure

- Life Satisfaction
"How satisfied are you with your life as a whole?"
 - 0 = Very satisfied or satisfied 84.4%
 - 1 = Very Dissatisfied, dissatisfied or indifferent 15.6%

Independent Measure

- Self-Perceived Intelligence
"Compared to other people your age, how intelligent are you?"
 - 0 = Average or below average 39.5%
 - 1 = Above average 60.5%

Control Measure

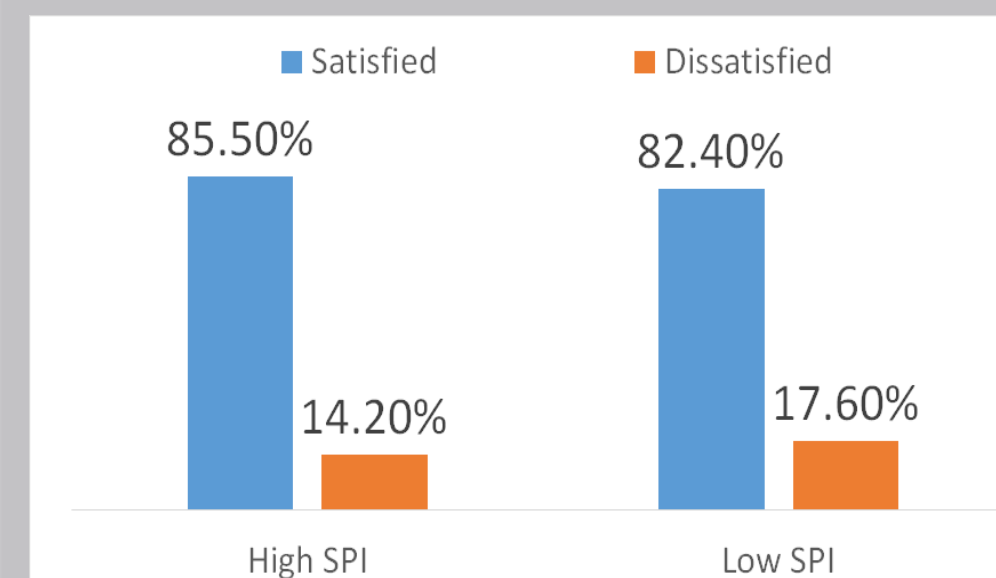
- Gender
 - Male 46.1%
 - Female 53.9%

Analysis

- Cross tabulation and Chi-square using SPSS

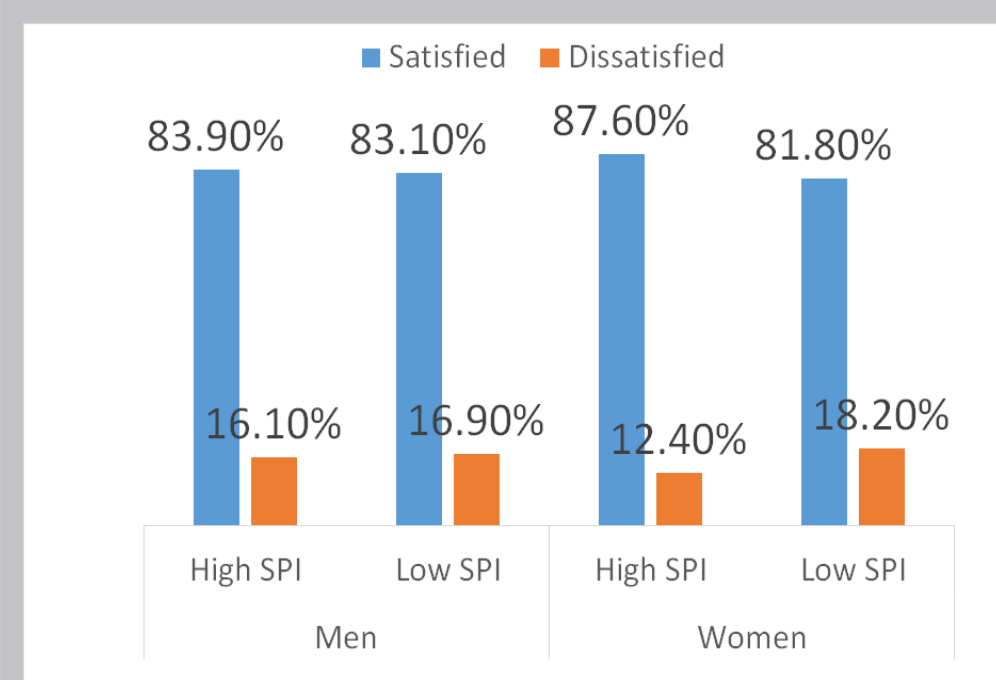
Results

Figure 1. Percentage reporting Life Satisfaction levels by Self-perceived Intelligence (SPI)



Note. Chi-square test is significant at $p < .01$

Figure 2. Percentage reporting Life Satisfaction levels by Self-perceived Intelligence (SPI) by Gender



Note: Chi-square tests are not significant for men but significant for women at $p < .001$.

Summary of Findings

- As hypothesized, higher self-perceived intelligence levels are more likely to be satisfied with their life.
- As hypothesized, females who considered their intelligence "above average" reported higher life satisfaction percentages than above average intelligence males.
- The effect of self-perceived intelligence on life satisfaction for males was not statistically significant.

Policy Implications

- Increased focus on building self-perceived intelligence confidence when treating patients with lower life satisfaction would be warranted.
- Focus on self-perceived intelligence should be more emphasized with females than males.

References

- Furnham, A., & Buchanon, T. (2005). Personality, gender, and self-perceived intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences, 39*(3), 543-555.
- Kang, S., Shaver, P.R., Sue, S., Min, K., & Jing, H. (2003). Culture-specific patterns in the prediction of life satisfaction: Roles of emotion, relationship quality, and self-esteem. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology, 29*(12), 1596-1608.
- Moksnes, U.K., & Espnes, G.A. (2013). Self-esteem and life satisfaction in adolescents – gender and age as potential moderators. *Quality of Life Research, 22*(10), 2921-2928.
- Palmer, B., Donaldson, C., & Stough, C. (2002). Emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. *Personality and Individual Differences, 33*(7), 1091-1100.