

A STUDY ON WISDOM LEVELS AMONG RETIRED PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this investigation was to identify the wisdom levels among retired professionals according to the personal variables selected for the study. The differences in wisdom levels were studied according to the retired professional's age, gender, retired occupation, education, and current working status. A sample number of 180 retired professionals from five categories of occupations (teaching, research, administration, law and medicine) were selected. To study the wisdom levels among the retired professionals a scale was developed on wisdom and standardized by the investigator called as self-measured wisdom scale. The results of the study indicate that, the retired professionals belonged to the 61-65 years were found more on the above average wisdom level than the older age group retirees. Retired men were wiser than the retired women and retired occupation wise differences shows that, the number of administrators had above average wisdom levels whereas average wisdom levels were higher among lawyers. Wisdom levels, according to education wise shows that, the retired professionals with doctoral degree and post-graduate degrees were wiser. Further, the results of the study also show that, the retired, who is working as full-time employee after their formal retirement was wiser than the sample that is not-working.

KEYWORDS: Wisdom, Professionals, Elders, Professions

INTRODUCTION

In India 28 million people were working in organized sector (2011 census data), the percentage of women employed in this sector are 19.9% and the rest of them were men. Within the next five years, 25% of our current public sector workforce will be eligible for retirement. Within the next five years, 25% of our current public sector workforce will be eligible for retirement. As public sector workers retire important skills and organizational wisdom walks out.

Retirement patterns have changed extensively in recent years, and continue to evolve rapidly. No longer defining a sharp transition from full-time employment, retirement is increasingly viewed as a progression, with several steps on a journey of total commitment to work to final exit from the labour force.

Further the older and retired population is looking for more meaningful, challenging ways to spend their retirement years; this a valuable need requires a solution.

The elderly in India are generally obeyed, revered, considered to be fountains of knowledge and wisdom, and treated with respect and dignity by family and community members. In most instances, the elderly, care for their grandchildren and assist with household chores. Even the children continually consult them on most of the important aspects of life.

Traditionally, research on aging has focused on the cognitive aspects of age-related changes,

a “phenomenon of decline”. Old age is associated with declines in many aspects of cognition (Hedden and Gabrieli, 2004; Raz and Rodrigue, 2006; Park and Reuter-Lorenz, 2009), as well as with a variety of detrimental stereotypes of incompetence (Cuddy et al., 2005; Kite et al., 2005; North and Fiske, 2012) but there is an aspect to it that “holds more promise than present reality may reveal”: wisdom (Baltes and Staudinger, 2000).

The concept of wisdom has its roots in religion and philosophy (see Ardelt, 2004; Baltes and Smith, 2008). Wisdom is a complex, multi-faceted construct; there is no consensus on its definition. The Berlin Wisdom Paradigm (Baltes& Smith, 1990; Baltes& Staudinger, 2000) defined wisdom as expert knowledge in the fundamental pragmatics of life that permits exceptional insight, judgment, and advice about complex and uncertain matters and expertise in the conduct and meaning of life.

The baby boomers are the building blocks that stand in the middle of past and future. With this necessity, it was clear that the wisdom of retired people considered an important era of research, it is really important to study the wisdom and utilize the immense source of knowledge (Age well foundation, 2010).

In order to establish an empirical investigation on the multifaceted construct, i.e. wisdom of retired professionals from the selected categories of occupations, a research was proposed on “A multi-dimensional study on retired professionals’ wisdom”. As part of this research the wisdom levels among retired professionals were selected to study.

METHODOLOGY

- **Sampling Procedure**

a) Sampling Criteria

Retired professionals from five categories (teaching, research, administration, law and medicine) and who were belonging to the age group of 61-75 years were selected for the study.

b) Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study (since persons who were retired from choosing categories of occupations and willing to fill the questionnaire were included for the study).

c) Sample Size

Retired professionals about 180 members from choosing categories of occupations were selected for the study.

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample (Retired Professionals)

S. No	Category of Retired Occupations	No. of Respondents		Total Sample
		Men	Women	
1	Teaching	30	30	60
2	Research	24	6	30
3	Administration	15	15	30
4	Lawyers	27	3	30
5	Doctors	21	9	30
6	Total	117	63	180

d) Selection of Retired Professionals

- Retired professionals (teaching, research and administration) list and contact details were procured from universities, Government colleges, research centers and laboratories (pension cell).
- The lawyers, retired in the Government sector list was procured from Bar Council.
- Retired doctor's details of Government hospitals and for retired doctors association located in Malakpet was obtained by the investigator.
- From the list the people belonging to the age group of 60 to 75 years were separated.
- From the list the retirees (61-75 years) who belonged to gazetted officer category were selected for the study.
- The investigator explained the purpose of research to the retirees and who came forward to participate in the investigation were selected as a sample.

MEASUREMENT TOOLS

a) General Profile Schedule

A general information, schedule which includes age, gender, educational qualification, retired occupation and current status.

b) Self-Measured Wisdom Scale

Self-measured wisdom scale was developed for the study to measure the wisdom levels of retired professionals. Reliability of the scale was 0.81 which reveals that the instrument is suitable to measure the wisdom among retired professionals.

PROCEDURE

The retired professionals from five categories of occupations and belonging to the age range of 61-75 years were purposively selected from the Hyderabad city to conduct the study. The collected data were coded and analyzed using frequencies and percentages to identify the wisdom levels among retired professionals.

RESULTS

Table 2: Wisdom Levels of Retired Professionals Based on Age

S. No	Wisdom Scores	Category Details	61-65 Years	66-70 Years	71-75 Years
1	256 below	Low	--	--	--
2	257-287	below average	5(10%)	20(17%)	5(39%)
3	288-328	Average	27(55%)	79(67%)	7(54%)
4	329-359	Above average	17(35%)	19(16%)	1(7%)
5	360 and above	High	--	--	--
6	Total		49(100%)	118(100%)	13(100%)

The table above gives the levels of wisdom among retirees arranged according to age groups. In above average level, (35%) of 61-65 years, (16%) of 66-70 years and only (7%) of 71-75 years were found. It means the above average wisdom was highest among 61-65 years and low among 71-75 years.

In average wisdom level, (67%) of 66-70 years and almost equal percent of the sample from both the age groups, i.e. (55%) from 61-65 years and (54%) from 71-75 years were observed. It means average wisdom level was highest among 66-70 years old retirees than the other two age groups.

In below average wisdom level, (39%) of 71-75 years, followed by (17%) of 66-70 years and only (10%) of 61-65 years retirees were noticed. It means below average wisdom was highest among 71-75 years and low among 61-65 years old retirees.

It shows from the results that wisdom levels were decreasing with an increase in age because above average wisdom level was noticed high between 61-65 years, the average wisdom level was seen in 66-70 years and finally below average level were found more among 71-75 years due age related declines in physical and cognitive abilities.

Table 3: Wisdom Levels of Retired Professionals Based on Gender

S. No	Wisdom Scores	Category Details	Men	Women
1	256 below	Low	--	--
2	257-287	below average	15(13%)	15(24%)
3	288-328	Average	76(65%)	37(59%)
4	329-359	Above average	26(22%)	11(17%)
5	360 and above	High	--	--
6	Total		117(100%)	63(100%)

The above table gives the details of gender differences in wisdom levels of both retired men and women. Except on below average wisdom level, men percent was higher than women on remaining wisdom levels.

On the above average level, (22%) of men and (17%) of women were visible. On the average wisdom level, (65%) of men and (59%) of women were noticed. Finally, on below average wisdom level (24%) of women and only (13%) of men were found. It shows that the above average and average wisdom were higher among men than the women, whereas below average wisdom was higher among women than men. This might be caused by variations in doing activities and roles performed by both men and women might create the differences in wisdom level, therefore more men compared to women were wiser.

Table 4: Wisdom Levels of Retired Professionals Based on Occupation

S. No	Wisdom Scores	Category Details	Teaching	Research	Administration	Lawyers	Doctors
1	256 below	Low	--	--	--	--	--
2	257-287	below average	20 (33%)	4 (13%)	3 (10%)	--	3 (10%)
3	288-328	Average	35 (58%)	17 (57%)	16 (53%)	24 (80%)	21 (70%)
4	329-359	Above average	5 (9%)	9 (30%)	11 (37%)	6 (20%)	6 (20%)
5	360 and above	High	--	--	--	--	--
6	Total		60 (100%)	30 (100%)	30 (100%)	30 (100%)	30 (100%)

The table-4 depicts the details of wisdom levels among retirees were distributed according to selected professions. With regard to above average wisdom level, (37%) of administrators followed by (30%) of researchers, equal percent of both doctors (20%) and lawyers (20%) and only (9%) teachers were noticed. It shows above average wisdom was high among administrators and low among teachers.

In average wisdom level, (80%) of lawyers followed by (70%) of doctors were majorly noticed. It means average wisdom was more among lawyers and doctors.

In below average wisdom level, (33%) of teachers was found majorly than the retired professionals from other occupations. It shows below average wisdom was high among teachers and very low among administrators and doctors. No one from the law profession was seen in below average category. This might be due to the reasons that compared to other professions, lawyers were still working actively than the other professions, while working people completely focus on the tasks and brain works actively all these might help the lawyers to see more average wisdom level and less on below average wisdom level.

Table 5: Wisdom Levels of Retired Professionals Based on Education

S. No	Wisdom Scores	Category Details	Graduation	Post-Graduation	Ph.D
1	256 below	Low	--	--	--
2	257-287	below average	6(32%)	23(20%)	7(15%)
3	288-328	Average	11(58%)	74(64%)	28(61%)
4	329-359	Above average	2(11%)	18(16%)	11(24%)
5	360 and above	High	--	--	--
6	Total		19(100%)	115(100%)	46(100%)

It was found from the above table that, on above average level, (24%) of retirees with doctorate degrees, (16%) of retirees with post-graduation degrees and finally (11%) of retirees with graduation were observed. It means retirees holding doctorates were observed higher on above average wisdom level than the retirees who are holding post-graduate and graduate degrees.

On the average wisdom level, (64%) of retirees with post-graduation followed by (61%) of doctorate degree holders and finally (58%) of graduates were noticed. This means the average wisdom level was noticed high among post-graduates and low among graduates.

On below average wisdom level, comparatively graduates (32%) were observed more and very less percent of the doctorates (15%) were seen. It seems like respondents with doctorates were wiser, the reasons may be like their higher educational status might motivate them to focus more on actively engaging tasks which might help them to be intelligent and curious all these factors might make them to visible more on above average level of wisdom.

Table 6: Wisdom Levels of Retired Professionals Based on Current Status

S. No	Wisdom Scores	Category Details	Not Working	Working Part Time	Working Full Time
1	257 below	Low	--	--	--
2	258-283	below average	27(30%)	3(6%)	--
3	284-319	Average	56(63%)	30(61%)	27(64%)
4	320-345	Above average	6(7%)	16(33%)	15(36%)
5	346 and above	High	--	--	--
6	Total		89(100%)	49(100%)	42(100%)

It was found from the above table that, the retirees who are working on a full-time basis (36%) were more seen in the above average wisdom level followed by retirees holding part-time (33%) and not working status (7%). It shows that full-time working retirees were seen more and not working retirees were seen less on the above average wisdom level.

With little variations in percentages, more than half of the retirees from three employment positions were observed in average level. It was interesting to notice from the above table that none of the full-time working retirees seen on below average level, whereas (30%) of non-working retirees found higher on below average level.

It was clear from the results that the sample who is working full time had high percent of above average and

average wisdom level, whereas the retirees who are not-working had the highest percent of below average wisdom. It means after formal retirement, retirees who find a full-time job were wiser than the retirees who are staying at home after the retirement. This might be due to the reason that their current full-time employment status might make them to become active and energetic in handling the things, this might encourage them to be wiser than the other groups.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the findings revealed that, wisdom levels were decreasing with an increase in age and retired men were found to be wiser than the retired women. Occupation wise differences in wisdom levels show that, above average wisdom was high among administrators and low among teachers below average wisdom was high among teachers and very low among administrators and doctors. Further, the results of the study also depicted that the subjects who are highly educated and who are still working after their formal retirement were wiser than other groups. Finally, it can be concluded that, the majority of the retired professionals were wise, even after their retirement. This group is looking to spend their time in a more constructive way and also ready to express and share their vast source of knowledge and experience to the people and society.

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