

ABSTRACT

This research intends to answer two questions: (1) Are senior citizens resources and why? (2) What are the drivers of their self-reliance? To answer the first question, a qualitative study was carried out using interviews and observations. Forty-three senior citizens were selected using a snowball sampling technique from Kolkata and nearby areas; 22 young adults shared their opinions from same locations to gauge whether those were congruent with the views of senior citizens. Senior citizens perceive themselves as resources because they possess positive behavioural traits, intrapersonal and interpersonal abilities, and wellness. The views were consistent with 21 young participants. Senior citizens prefer to stay active for long span to become valuable for the family and society. They require support and opportunities from their families and societies to harness their abilities and change adverse perceptions about them. To answer the second question, a quantitative study, administering a questionnaire, examines whether positive attributes directly and positive attributes via happiness indirectly predict the self-reliance of senior citizens vs. young adults. Also, it tests whether psychological immune system moderates the indirect relations. Participants were 167 senior citizens and 174 young adults. The results suggest that psychological immune system of senior citizens and happiness of young adults are the most necessary promoter of their self-reliance. The possession of positive attributes furthers the happiness that improves self-reliance of senior citizens and young adults. Psychological immune system does not show moderating effects but acts as a precursor to self-reliance of senior citizens and young adults. Implications of the findings are discussed.

Keywords: Positive behavioural traits, intra and interpersonal abilities, wellness, happiness, psychological immune system, self-reliance.