



# Impact of Community Service on Happiness and Health of Adolescents

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**Abstract:** The aim of this research was to ascertain whether or not there is a relationship between the quantity of community service that teenagers engage in and the degree of happiness and mental health that they characterise for themselves. As part of this study effort, we sought to find out how teens' level of community service involvement related to various measures of their happiness and mental health. A total of 100 teenagers—56 men and 44 women—were chosen from different parts of Indore, Madhya Pradesh, using the snowball sampling technique. Fifty of them participated in community service, while the other fifty did not. Participants in the research were given a range of questionnaires, including a demographic survey, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, and the Mental Health Questionnaire. An individual's emotional and psychological well-being is positively impacted by volunteering, according to the results of a research using Pearson correlation. Additionally, compared to their classmates who did not participate in the program, teenagers who performed community service reported noticeably greater levels of happiness and mental health, as shown by independent sample t-tests. The results show that community service has a beneficial influence on teenagers' emotional and mental health, indicating that it might be a useful way to help young people.

**Keywords:** Service, Community, Adolescents, Happiness, Health

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## INTRODUCTION

When a person is in their teenage years, they go through significant changes on many different levels, including the biological, psychological, and social ones. A person's identities, beliefs, and behaviors that they create throughout this time period have a significant impact on the pleasure that they will experience in the future. Given the frequency of emotional challenges such as stress, anxiety, and mood swings during the course of adolescence, there is a growing concern all over the globe for the promotion of optimal mental health and happiness throughout this time period. An encouraging way to boost the health and happiness of teenagers is for them to participate in volunteer work or community service..

### Comprehending Community Service

The concept of "community service" refers to voluntary actions undertaken without monetary compensation with the aim of enhancing the well-being of individuals or the broader community as a whole. Adolescents may deeply connect with various social concerns, develop a sense of empathy towards others, and establish a strong sense of belonging within a supportive community when they actively engage in serving their local community. Assistance to the elderly, including helping them with daily tasks and providing companionship, cleanups of local areas to promote environmental sustainability, peer tutoring to support academic achievement, and awareness campaigns to educate the community about important issues are all

examples of what may be considered such valuable and impactful activities. The mental and emotional well-being of adolescents is significantly improved when they engage in activities such as these, as they acquire a sense of responsibility, cultivate essential social skills, and discover profound meaning in their lives.

### **Community Service and Wellbeing**

More and more research is pointing to the fact that volunteering improves people's mental and emotional health. It has been reported that adolescents who participate in community service had higher grades, increased levels of self-confidence, and more robust social networks. When it comes to developing resilience in the face of mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression, these characteristics are very necessary. When a person is actively engaged in their community, they may have a sense of fulfillment and cultivate good social interactions, both of which may contribute to an improvement in their mental health and overall happiness.

Research on the specific ways in which engagement in community service impacts the well-being and emotional stability of adolescents is still scarce, especially in culturally diverse contexts such as India. This is despite the fact that the benefits of community service are readily apparent. If these processes are better understood, it may be possible to shed light on the rapidly increasing number of mental health problems and the rapid changes in society that are occurring among young Indians. The purpose of this study is to empirically analyze the link between adolescent community service and psychological well-being in an urban Indian environment. This will be done in order to overcome the information gap that has been identified. It is possible that the findings will be of use to parents, educators, and legislators in their attempts to stimulate community participation among young people as a method of enhancing the health and happiness of these individuals.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To investigate the effects of community service on teenagers' general health and happiness.
2. To assess how happy and healthy teenagers who do community service are compared to those who don't.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Study Design**

An organised survey was given to two distinct groups of adolescents: those who offered their time to assist in the betterment of their community, and those who did not contribute their time. The survey was designed to determine the teens' self-reported levels of pleasure and health in order to make an informed decision. For the purpose of conducting a trustworthy assessment of both mental and physical health, a battery of validated and standardised questions was used.

#### **Participants**

The snowball sampling method was used to choose one hundred adolescents ( $N = 100$ ) from a variety of places in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. The sample consisted of fifty individuals who are involved in

community service activities on a regular basis, as well as fifty individuals who do not often participate in their community service activities. The total participants varied in age from thirteen to nineteen years old, with men making up 56 percent of the group and girls making up 44 percent. This was done to ensure that the demography of teenagers was accurately represented.

## Measures

A questionnaire package was sent to participants, which included:

- **Demographic Sheet:** Collected basic background details such as age, gender, education level, and extent of participation in community service activities.
- **Mental Health Questionnaire:** 12-item questionnaire developed to evaluate typical mental and physical health concerns. People said things like "no difficulty" and "extreme difficulty." Better general health was reflected by lower scores. At Time 1 and Time 2, the instrument showed an adequate level of internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.62$  and  $\alpha = 0.58$ , respectively).
- **The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ):** This scale was created by Argyle and Hills (2002) to assess subjective feelings of happiness and emotional health. The high reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.91$ - $0.92$ ) was supported by the item-total correlation ( $r = 0.80$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and inter-item correlations ranging from 0.04 to 0.65 (mean = 0.28).

## Procedure

We ensured that all participants or their legal guardians provided their informed consent before any data was gathered. This was done before ever collecting any data. Every single person who participated in the study was aware of its objective. They were required to fill out a demographic sheet before completing the General Health Questionnaire and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. Both of these questionnaires were administered to them. For the purpose of recording the responses, a calm and undisturbed environment was used. After all was said and done, we provided a summary of the results that each participant had obtained as a way of expressing our gratitude for their participation in the research.

## Data Analysis

To compare the health and happiness ratings given by participants and non-participants, an independent samples t-test was used. A Pearson correlation analysis was used to further investigate the relationship between the self-reported health and happiness levels of teenagers and their involvement in community service.

## RESULT

**Table 1: Correlation between Health and Happiness**

Variables	N	r	Sig
Health & Happiness	100	-.855**	0.00

The significance level of the correlation is 0.01 (2-tailed).

**Table 2: Independent Sample T-Test Comparing Volunteer and Non-Volunteer Happiness**

	Volunteers		Non-volunteers				
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	t(98)	P	Cohen's d
Happiness	153.882	15.967	116.422	19.759	10.426**	0.00	2.08

The happiness ratings of the volunteers (n = 50, M = 153.882, SD = 15.967) and the non-volunteers (n = 50, M = 116.422, SD = 19.759) were significantly different according to an independent sample t test (t (98) = -10.426, p = .000, d = 2.08).

**Table 3: Results Show Significant Health Differences Between Volunteers and Non-Volunteers**

	Volunteers		Non-volunteers				
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	t(98)	P	Cohen's d
health	6.300	3.1184	26.3400	11.1403	12.249**	0.00	-2.44

**Table 4: Volunteer versus Non-Volunteer Gender, Age, and Marital Status Frequencies, Percentages, and Chi-Square Test**

Variable	Volunteers N=50	Non-Volunteers N=50	X <sup>2</sup>
Gender			
Male	26 (46.4%)	30 (53.6%)	0.420ns
Female	24 (54.5%)	20(45.5%)	
Marital status			
Married	28(53.8%)	24(46.2%)	0.423ns
Unmarried	22(45.8%)	26(54.2%)	
Age			
Young	30(52.6%)	27(47.4%)	0.545ns
old	20(46.5%)	23(53.5%)	

## DISCUSSION

This study aimed to get a better understanding of the ways in which community service impacts the emotional and physical well-being of this group by comparing teens who are significantly active in volunteer work with those who are less interested in volunteer work. Based on self-reported data acquired from standardised instruments such as the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) and a General Health Questionnaire, the findings indicate that adolescents who give their time report higher levels of happiness and better health than their peers who do not volunteer their time. Volunteering has been found to have good impacts on both physical and mental health, and these results lend credence to the conclusions of previous worldwide research that have shown these benefits. Children and adolescents who participated in community activities reported having fewer health problems and higher levels of satisfaction. When all of

these findings are taken into consideration, it is clear that volunteering in one's community not only increases one's level of pleasure but also inspires healthier behaviours and methods of coping with stress.

The results of this study provide credence to the findings of Jenkinson et al. (2013), who conducted a meta-analysis and discovered that volunteering had a positive impact on the physical and mental health of individuals. The teenagers from Indore who took part in this study as volunteers shown indicators of enhanced purpose, organised involvement, and interpersonal connection. These are all characteristics that are known to have a good impact on the physical and mental health of adolescents. According to Qualls (2002), the three most important aspects of maintaining one's health are lowering the likelihood of becoming sick, maintaining one's functional abilities, and leading a life that is fulfilling. Through a circuitous route, these characteristics are reflected in our results. Using the health concerns scale, it was found that the adolescents who engaged in community service had less difficulty going about their daily lives. This is a positive sign for the adolescents' psychological and social well-being as well as their emotional resilience.

According to Saroglou (2005), voluntary work and other acts of selflessness have the potential to assist individuals in their emotional and personal development. Our findings provide credence to his assertion that the levels of social belongingness, self-confidence, and emotional control demonstrated by adolescent volunteers were much greater than those showed by non-volunteers. There is a good chance that these psychological advantages are responsible, at least in part, for an improved feeling of well-being. The results of the Pearson correlation analysis showed that there was a positive association between self-reported health and happiness and participation in community service. According to studies conducted by Van Willigen (2000) and Young & Glasgow (1998), involvement in volunteer work is associated with increased levels of pleasure and satisfied with one's life. Community service may have a stress-reducing influence, which may lead to healthier habits and physiological advantages in the long term. Despite the fact that our study only involved teens and did not directly analyse these impacts, it is possible that doing community service has such an impact.

The advantages of participating in group-based volunteer activities were highlighted by Reitschlin (1998) as being particularly beneficial in terms of alleviating pain and mitigating the impact of day-to-day pressures. The fact that adolescents who volunteered showed more resilience and reported fewer health issues connected with academic stress, peer difficulties, and social hurdles is consistent with this approach. The cultural context of our research is a significant addition to the ongoing debates taking place throughout the world about youth engagement. In order to shed light on the culturally distinctive benefits of structured community service as a form of youth protection and enrichment, our research focusses on Indian adolescents. India is a nation in which school networks, family engagement, and social responsibility play crucial roles in the development of the country.

It is true that the research has some positive aspects, but it also has some negative aspects. In the event that the snowball sampling approach has the potential to induce selection bias, the results may not be relevant to a larger population. Also, since the study was conducted using a cross-sectional approach, it is not able to make any causal implications about the influence that community work has on one's health and happiness over the course of a longer period of time. It is recommended that future research ponder the

possibility of conducting longitudinal studies in order to track these features throughout time. It may be beneficial to make use of qualitative methods such as focus groups or interviews in order to get a more in-depth comprehension of the motivations and experiences in which adolescents engage in volunteer work.

## CONCLUSION

Community participation improves adolescent health and happiness, according to one research. Volunteers consistently outscored non-volunteers on standardised tests of general happiness and well-being, suggesting that civic involvement affects teenagers' development. Helping others and being active in society has mental, emotional, and physiological benefits, according to growing studies. These findings expand that understanding. Statistical research show that volunteering improves well-being. These studies use Pearson correlation and independent sample t-tests. Helping others improves emotional stability, purpose, and self-worth; teen volunteers reported decreased health-related anxiety and increased life satisfaction. Our findings support earlier research indicating volunteering boosts resilience, life happiness, and social connectivity. These findings may assist Indian public health, education, and youth development initiatives. Policymakers and educators may promote healthier and happier teens by organising adolescent volunteering in schools and localities. Community involvement in academic or extracurricular activities may improve students' health and civic obligation. The study also stresses the need for further empirical research in numerous socio-cultural situations in India to determine how volunteering affects teenagers' long-term well-being and happiness. Longitudinal or mixed-method studies may help researchers better understand volunteering processes and experiences. Teen volunteering promotes overall growth and selflessness. Engaging kids in community service benefits the community and their well-being. This study shows that every teenager should participate in civic life for a better, more meaningful future, which is especially relevant considering the rising relevance of civic engagement in contemporary society.

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