

HOW CHANGES IN SOCIAL, PHYSICAL, AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES INFLUENCE LIFE
SATISFACTION IN LEISURE ORIENTED RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES AMONG
OLDER FEMALES

By

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

LORC	Leisure Oriented Retirement Community
LORCs	Leisure Oriented Retirement Communities

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
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By

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Leisure oriented retirement communities are an increasingly popular trend among retirees with an impact on numerous aspects of gerontology. The images of leisure oriented retirement communities are that of neighborhoods that facilitate various activities that add to an older adult's life satisfaction. Due to the growing popularity of these communities, these images and advertisements elicit the question of how changes in social, physical, and leisure activities influence life satisfaction in a leisure oriented retirement community. A descriptive research study was undertaken in a leisure oriented retirement community in north-central Florida with over 50,000 residents. Twelve female residents were asked a series of questions on activities and life satisfaction before and since moving to the leisure oriented retirement community. Content analysis was utilized to analyze the data. Through manifest content analysis several themes emerged which illustrated how the leisure oriented retirement community's supported activities impacted one's life satisfaction. These themes were then examined and two theories emerged, continuity theory and person-environment fit model. The findings suggest that the female respondents became more involved with their activities upon moving to the leisure oriented retirement community. Most of the women indicated that, although they were satisfied with their

activities before moving to the leisure oriented retirement community, the community-facilitated activities had a positive impact on their life satisfaction. The respondents gave various reasons for their increased involvement in activities and increase in life satisfaction citing the convenience of the facilities and clubs and the variety of social connections made within the community. The convenience of the community-facilitated activities and social connections of this leisure oriented retirement community add to the ability of these women to age successfully. The findings suggest the amenities of leisure oriented retirement communities and their impact on these respondents may warrant further research on how residents of these communities age.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

George Barnard Shaw once said of retirement, “The only way to avoid being miserable [in retirement] is not to have enough leisure to wonder whether you are happy or not.” Retirement is often thought of as the time in one’s life where one can lounge by the pool for hours, play golf every day of the year, and not have a care in the world. Leisure Oriented Retirement Communities (LORCs) have redefined the American concept of retirement, and the Baby Boomer generation (1946-1964) is latching on to the idea of retiring to a location with numerous social, physical, and leisure activities.

LORCs have only recently become a trend in the United States. Before World War II, most people did not survive to retirement, but with the onset of labor unions, healthcare advances, and social security-- retirement has become a part of life that most Americans will experience (Moschis, Bellenger, & Curasi, 2005). Improvements in healthcare and financial security have created an environment where many retire at age 65, and can expect to live in health and financial security for another ten to 15 years (U.S. Census, 2000). Traditionally, many Americans chose not to relocate upon retirement. Today a growing number of Americans are choosing to move to an out of state retirement community (Rogers & Raymer, 2001; Golant, 1990). The increasing number of LORCs is changing the way people retire. Vesperi (1985) in her case studies of older adults notes that many retirees flocked to St. Petersburg, Florida in the mid-1950s because of its warm climate and elder friendly policies. At the same time retirement communities in Arizona such as Youngtown and Sun City started to revolutionize the way Americans spent their retirement years; by offering residents numerous community- facilitated activities (Moschis et al., 2005).

Older adults, particularly affluent older adults, can expect to retire with more money and to live longer and healthier lives than any previous generation (Moschis et al., 2005). These retirees are revolutionizing the way Americans view retirement, and retirement communities across the country are marketing to this new generation of older adults. A drive down any major interstate in Florida or Arizona is not complete without seeing a number of advertisements with smiling retirees involved in an activity.

Sun City, one of the first LORCs, located outside of Phoenix, Arizona has 38,000 residents (U.S. Census, 2000). The popularity of Sun City sparked multiple Sun City communities around Phoenix, and last year Del Webb, Sun City's developer, reported 50 retirement communities in the process of being built. In 2000, Florida's largest LORC, The Villages, had 8,000 residents (U.S. Census, 2000). By 2009, The Villages had over 75,000 residents, a 937.5% increase in population (The Villages, 2010).

Some studies suggest that retirees move to these communities for: homogeneity, overall esthetic appeal, and safety (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). McHugh and Larson-Keagy (2005) have detailed these trends among older adults who have relocated to Sun City. They found Sun City was made up of retirees who were alike with respect to race, religion, and political beliefs. Residents of Sun City relocated there because of the esthetically pleasing grounds and the relative safety offered by the gates of Sun City. However, there is no research on whether these gated homogeneous facilities lead to a higher life satisfaction for their residents due to the numerous amounts of community-facilitated activities (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005; Youngblood, 2005; Streib, Folts, & Peacock, 2006).

Several theories, often competing theories, have been used to explain successful aging and life satisfaction in the aging adult. Although Cumming and Henry (1961) argued that in order for

older adults to remain satisfied with their lives they must disengage from society as they age, most agree older adults achieve higher life satisfaction or at a minimum maintain their current life satisfaction by remaining active or becoming more active as they age. Two decades later, Atchley (1982) proposed continuity theory theorizing that activities and life satisfaction carry over from mid- to late life. Continuity theory suggested that to achieve successful aging one must continue one's established pattern of behavior across the lifespan. Furthermore, person-environment fit model added to continuity theory by suggesting that this fit between activities and environment influence behavior. Extensive research has shown that an older adult's well-being with respect to their physical and mental conditions is influenced by aspects of their environment (Cvitkovich & Wister, 2001; Lawton, 1990; Carp & Carp, 1984; Kahana, 1982; Lawton, 1998).

Empirical Basis for Questions

Previously, researchers have examined LORCs by examining relocation pattern trends, effects of widowhood, and themes in the community (Moschis et al., 2005; Youngblood, 2005; McHugh, 2000; McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). However, there is little previous research on how LORC supported or sponsored activities influence life satisfaction. These activities are a central premise of why individuals relocate to LORCs. The lack of understanding of how the LORC's community facilitated activities influence life satisfaction is a primary question in understanding the benefits of an LORC. This gap elicits the question of how community-facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities impact life satisfaction. The site used for this research is a LORC that is best described as a middle to upper income independent living LORC. The growing popularity of LORCs, and the portion of the population that will soon be entering retirement years makes this topic relevant to gerontologists, architects, community planners, and the aging population.

Specific Aims

An active retirement has become the norm in an older American adult's life, and LORCs are becoming an increasingly popular option among retirees (Brooks & Adams, 2001). Many of the amenities offered in LORCs are neighborhood or community sponsored social, physical, and leisure activities. The smiling faces on billboards and commercials seem to portray older adults who are satisfied with their choice in retirement, but we know that those billboards are designed for marketing purposes. This study will ask women (60-75) who live in a LORC a series of questions about their social, physical, and leisure activity patterns – prior to and since relocating to a LORC – and how these activities contribute to their life satisfaction. The study will be conducted in a LORC, located in north central Florida roughly an hour north of both Tampa and Orlando. Restaurants, shopping, healthcare, religious opportunities, and entertainment opportunities help to make this LORC all inclusive. The purpose of this study is to better understand how community supported activities in a LORC relate to life satisfaction. Listed below are the specific questions that this research seeks to answer:

Before moving to this LORC how did social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction?

How do the LORC's facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction?

How has life satisfaction changed since moving to this LORC?

Below is a list of terms used throughout the paper:

- **COMMUNITY SUPPORTED/FACILITATED/ SPONSORED ACTIVITIES.** These activities are in some way provided or generated by the leisure oriented retirement community.
- **LEISURE ACTIVITIES.** Leisure activities are activities that occur during non- work time, provide a sense of happiness, freedom of choice to participate in the activity, and a high level of involvement.

- **LEISURE ORIENTED RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES.** Leisure oriented retirement communities are self-contained communities where there is an emphasis placed on leisure activities through facilities and organized activities. Leisure oriented retirement communities contain these four elements (1) a retirement element- residents are no longer in full time employment and this affects their use of time and space (2) a community element-an age specific population, living in the same geographically bounded area (3) a degree of collectivity- which residents identify, and which may include shared activities, interests, and facilities (4) a sense of autonomy with security.
- **LIFE SATISFACTION.** Life satisfaction has been defined by past research as, “a global evaluation by the person of his or her life...individuals ‘construct’ a standard, which they perceive as appropriate for themselves, and compare the circumstances of their life to that standard” (Pavot, Diener, Colvin, & Sandvik, 1991, p.150).
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES.** Physical activities are any body movement that requires energy.
- **SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.** Social activities are the set of interactions and relationships between people.
- **SUCCESSFUL AGING.** Successful aging has been defined in the literature as, “more than being satisfied with one’s past and present circumstances... (it) suggest[s] an orientation to life that serves as a guide for future action and adaptation. In addition, many of the comments suggest strategies for successful aging reflecting philosophies that the older person had used earlier in life.” (Fisher, 1992, p.197).
- **YOUNG-OLD ADULTS.** Young-old adults are adults between the ages of 55-74.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout this chapter both research and theory will be evaluated to assist in building a foundation for the three principal research questions: Before moving to this LORC how did social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction?; How do the LORC's facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction?; How has life satisfaction changed since moving to this LORC? Several theories have attempted to explain activities as one ages and how this influences successful aging and life satisfaction (Cummings & Henry, 1961; Havighurst, 1963; Atchley, 1982; 1983; 1989; 1994; Lewin, 1951). Previous work suggests if one maintains or increases their activity as one ages the causal impact on life satisfaction is positive. One of the goals of this study is to investigate the impact an LORC has on one's activities and life satisfaction. As a basis for understanding the findings of this research this chapter will focus on: the history and themes of LORCs, demographics of LORCs, successful aging/ life satisfaction, continuity theory, person-environment fit model, and the defining characteristics of females as they age.

Leisure Oriented Retirement Communities

LORCs gained popularity in the mid part of the 20th century. Leisure orientated retirement communities are defined as communities where there is an emphasis on "leisure activities and the opportunities and facilities to pursue such" (Folts & Streib, 1994; Streib et al., 2006). The LORC is in stark contrast to the retirement housing options that had been common among older adults. LORCs offer residents the opportunity to partake in resort style living, offering an abundance of social, physical, and leisure activities to residents. Since the mid 1960s the popularity of these communities has increased dramatically. The growth in these communities is expected to continue as baby boomers begin to retire. One of the central concepts behind LORCs

is the amount and variety of activity in which residents can participate. Past research has found that older adults enjoy activities and this helps promote life satisfaction in older adults as they age (Ross & Drentea, 1998). The amount and variety of activities provide the residents with the ability to participate in an activity that maintains the same vigor residents might have had in their previous professions or before moving to the LORC. LORCs are designed with an emphasis on activities that engage their residents and encourage participation in the community (Streib et al., 2006).

Themes and History of LORCs

LORCs are defined above as; communities where there is an emphasis placed on leisure activities through facilities and organized activities (Folts & Streib, 1994; Streib et al., 2006). According to brochures from three prominent LORCs in the United States some key activities offered include: golf, tennis, swimming, pickleball, and social organizations (Karen Cobalt, Personal Communication, 2009; The Villages, 2009). Grant (2006) found that residents of retirement communities enjoyed a wide variety of, “intellectual, aesthetic, and recreational activities” (p. 49). LORCs range from small trailer parks with added amenities to large amenity based communities with multi-million dollar houses (Streib et al., 2006).

There are a variety of retirement facilities for older adults to choose from when considering retirement housing options: assisted living, congregate care, continuing care, and independent living (Biggs, Bernard, Kingston, & Nettleton, 2000). Assisted living, congregate care, and continuing care offer older adults a variety of amenities and a varying degree of support services, such as dining services and skilled nursing care (Biggs et al., 2000). Conversely, independent living is defined as, “houses, condominiums, apartments and mobile homes” (Biggs et al., p. 650, 2000). This review of retirement housing options will focus on leisure oriented retirement

communities, a form of independent living for older adults. Phillips, Bernard, Biggs, and Kingston (2001) identified four main attributes of retirement communities:

(1) a retirement element- residents are no longer in full time employment and this affects their use of time and space (2) a community element-an age specific population, living in the same geographically bounded area (3) a degree of collectivity- which residents identify, and which may include shared activities, interests, and facilities (4) a sense of autonomy with security (p. 650).

LORCs are comprised of all four main attributes of a retirement community; however, they also offer residents an opportunity to participate in a variety of community facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities.

There are a few themes that are noteworthy in LORCs. McHugh and Larson- Keagy (2005) identify three themes that emerged during a series of interviews with residents of Sun City. These themes that emerged include: birds of a feather, idyllic havens, and fortress mentality (McHugh & Larson- Keagy, 2005). The theme birds of a feather, refers to the same age, race, and socio economic groups that live in Sun City (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). The second theme was identified as idyllic havens, which was the way the residents interviewed described Sun City (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). The third theme that emerged during the interviews was the fortress mentality, as a way to describe the protective nature of LORCs (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). These trends in Sun City may help to explain the mentality that residents of other LORCs have about their community.

Retirement communities trace their origin to the 1920's when fraternal organizations, labor unions, and religious groups began buying discounted land in Florida for their retired members (Moschis et al., 2005). With the onset of the depression and World War II the popularity of retirement communities decreased (Moschis et al., 2005). Retirement communities did not re-emerge in popularity until after World War II, with the development of Youngtown in 1954 (Moschis et al., 2005). Located in Arizona, its popularity led to the development of Sun City

outside of Phoenix (McHugh & Larson- Keagy, 2005; Moschis et al., 2005). Sun City is a large-scale retirement community promoting a variety of social, physical, and leisure activities (McHugh & Larson- Keagy, 2005). With its opening in 1960, Sun City was in sharp contrast to the norm of aging ideas. Sun City marked the beginning of LORCs in the United States, and consequently led to the growth of the largest LORC developer (McHugh, 2000; McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005; Moschis et al., 2005). The amenities offered by LORCs have continued to develop as they have become an increasingly popular retirement option among older adults (Moschis et al., 2005). The predicted demand in growth for LORCs will continue to increase as the population of young-old in the United States continues to grow (Townshend, 2002; Moschis et al., 2005).

Demographics

The population of the United States is rapidly changing, with respect to age and population distribution. The U.S. Census predicted that the percentage of the American population over the age of 65 will grow by eight percent over the next 40 years (U.S. Census, 2008). There is no exact number or measurement on the number of LORCs or their residents in the United States. One of the most prominent LORC developers, Del Webb, constructed over 52 LORCs with over 18,000 residential homes built in 2007 (Karen Colbalt, Personal Communication, February 11, 2009). The growing young-old adult population is key to demand in new LORC construction (Moschis et al., 2005). Young- old adults are defined as older adults between the ages of 55-74 (Kart & Kinney, 2001). In a 2005 study, 1,463 Americans over the age of 55 were interviewed and asked their retirement plans, 21.4% indicated that they plan on living in a LORC (Moschis et al.).

LORCs are marketed to young-old adults over the age of 55, and previous research has indicated most young-old adults plan to retire between the ages of 63-65 (Haas & Serow, 2002).

The leading edge of the “baby boomer” generation will reach 65 by 2011 (Kart & Kinney, 2001). This generation spans three decades, and as a result the US population over the age of 65 will grow by 35% between 2010 and 2020 (Kart & Kinney, 2001; U.S. Census, 2008). The U.S. Census (2008) estimates that over one out of every four Americans is a Baby Boomer, making up the largest demographic group in the United States. Baby Boomers have seven times the purchasing power of later generations (Generation X & Y) (Misonzhnik, 2006). Del Webb, the largest developer of LORCs in the United States, reported 18% of survey respondents in the baby boomer generation wish to relocate to a different state when they retire (Del Webb, 1996). Based on the above estimates roughly 13,680,000 American Baby Boomers will need a retirement housing option in the next 20 years (U.S. Census, 2008; Misonzhnik, 2006; Del Webb 1996). Some regions, such as the southeastern and western regions of the United States reported higher interstate migration for those 65 and over (U.S. Census, 2003). Florida reported the highest interstate migration among older adults 60 and above (Longino & Manheimer, 1995; U.S. Census, 2000). Arizona, California, and Texas consistently ranked among the top locations for migration in the United States between 1960 and 1990 (Longino & Manheimer, 1995). In 2000, Nevada also reported a high portion of 65 and over interstate migration (U.S. Census, 2000). A report, from the U.S. Census in 2003, indicates that although Florida had the highest number of 65 and over interstate migrants; Nevada has the highest net migration of those 65 and over (He & Schachter, 2003). The state with the highest number of relocating interstate migrants was New York, with 61,000, out migrants relocating to Florida from 1995 to 2000 (He & Schachter, 2003). Florida also posted the highest gains for individual counties with Palm Beach County reporting one of the highest rates of interstate migration and Sumter County, posting the highest net migration of individuals 65 and over in the United States (He & Schachter, 2003). The three

states with the highest number of out moving interstate migrants were New York, Illinois, and California (He & Schachter, 2003). These findings are consistent with more recent findings about two of the most populous LORCs in Florida and Arizona. The samples in two recent studies done in an LORC indicate many of the inter state migrants had relocated to Florida and Arizona from the northeast or mid-western states (Youngblood, 2005; McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005).

LORCs can vary dramatically with respect to race. In previous research regarding LORCs, researchers have found that these communities are predominantly White (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). However, recently LORCs targeted towards minority racial and ethnic groups have become more popular. Two of the largest LORCs in the United States, The Villages in Florida and Sun City in Arizona, are analyzed below for racial demographic information. Efforts have been made to obtain the most recent population information according to the U.S. Census. The Villages, is spread throughout three counties, Sumter, Lake, and Marion. The 2007 U.S. Census population estimate suggested that Sumter County, home to the largest part of The Villages was 85% White, this is in contrast to the population demographic information provided in the 2000 U.S. Census on The Villages, that shows The Villages to be 98.5% White. This is also in sharp contrast to the racial demographics for Florida which is 80% white (U.S. Census, 2007). Similar statistics are found in Sun City, Maricopa County, Arizona, one of the largest LORCs in Arizona. As of 2007 the U.S. Census indicated that 96.4% of Sun City was White. This is in comparison to the population demographics of Maricopa County which is 79.1% White (2007). Arizona as a whole is 76.4% White (U.S. Census, 2007). This data on LORCs indicates a predominance of White residents.

LORCs are an increasingly popular retirement option among older adults. One of the central attractions of LORCs is the abundance of activities and options for retirement. LORCs market an abundance of activities and options for older adults that will help them age. Past research has suggested, residents enjoy the pristine setting, perceived safety of the community, and the demographic similarities of the residents. Residents are provided a community that encompasses all of their needs as they age. These communities, which provide residents with an abundance of social, physical, and leisure activities are expected to gain in popularity as the Baby Boomer generation retires. The popularity of these communities is expected to grow the most in the southeastern and southwestern regions of the United States based on past older adult migration trends. One of the principal attractions of an LORC for older adults is the variety of activities (McHugh & Larson- Keagy, 2005; Moschis et al., 2005), which has been shown to influence successful aging (Havighurst, 1963; Atchley, 1994).

Successful Aging

Successful aging is difficult to define (Tate, Lah, & Cuddy, 2003). For example, nineteen older adults were interviewed and asked their definition of successful aging; the range of responses varied (Fisher, 1992). Fisher (1992), suggests this about their views:

Successful aging involves more than being satisfied with one's past and present circumstances... (it) suggest[s] an orientation to life that serves as a guide for future action and adaptation. In addition, many of the comments suggest strategies for successful aging reflecting philosophies that the older person had used earlier in life (p.197).

Although, the above study did not establish a definitive definition of successful aging; it did suggest older adults view successful aging as a process guided by one's past actions.

Older adults not only vary in the way they define successful aging, but also in what they think successful aging entails. Rowe & Kahn (1998), defined successful aging as, "the many factors which permit individuals to continue to function effectively, both physically and

mentally, in old age” (p.xii). These factors have been identified as: cognitive function, psychological factors, autonomy, aging and social support, bereavement, support and control, and physiological and psychological pathways (Rowe & Kahn, 1998; Rowe & Kahn, 1987). Recent findings revealed two-thirds of older adults agreed successful aging is multidimensional (Phelan, Anderson, LaCroix, & Larson, 2004). Some of the factors that influence successful aging are: exercise- a physical factor, being a male- physiological and psychological pathways factor, and social contact through activities- aging and social support factor (Strawbridge, Cohen, Shema, & Kaplan, 1996; Roos & Havens, 1991). Some of the events that negatively influence successful aging include: having a chronic disease, having poor self assessed health, being depressed, having experienced the death of a spouse, losing mental capability, developing cancer, and being forced to retire or retiring due to health reasons (Roos & Havens, 1991).

Successful aging varies based on personal characteristics and past experiences (Rowe & Kahn, 1998; Fisher, 1992). What one older adult defines as successful aging can be drastically different than another’s definition of successful aging. Past research suggests some of the psychological components that influence successful aging are past experiences and personal characteristics (Atchley, 1982; 1983; 1994). For many individuals successful aging is measured by life satisfaction (Fisher, 1992; Havighurst, 1961). Havighurst (1961) suggests that for some people the outcome of successful aging is life satisfaction. While, Fisher (1992) found that although successful aging and life satisfaction are not interchangeable terms; some older adults think of life satisfaction as one of the outcomes of successful aging.

Depp and Jeste (2006) suggested that the biggest contributor to life satisfaction is prevention of disability and maintaining cognitive function. As previous research suggests one of the key factors, which positively influences successful aging is exercise (Rowe & Kahn, 1998).

Physical activity is suggested to increase health and decrease disability as one ages (Wu, McCrone, & Lai, 2008). This increase in health is linked with higher life satisfaction (Menec, 2003). Maintaining social connections has also increased life satisfaction (Neugarten et al., 1961). More recent findings suggest maintaining social activities helps one to maintain social contacts as they age (Strawbridge, et al., 1996; Roos & Havens, 1991).

Life satisfaction is one of the central components of subjective well-being (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griefin, 1985) and can be defined as, “contentment with one’s life in general” (Maddox, 1987, p. 399). More specifically, for the purposes of this research, life satisfaction is defined as, “a global evaluation by the person of his or her life” (Pavot, et al., 1991, p.150). Pavot, et al. (1991) go on to suggest that life satisfaction is defined when individuals ‘construct’ a standard, which they perceive as appropriate for themselves, and compare the circumstances of their life to that standard ” (p.150).

Successful aging and life satisfaction have been defined in several contexts in the above section. The following section will focus on theories used to explain how activities can influence successful aging and life satisfaction.

Theory

Theories help to understand how activities impact the successful aging and life satisfaction of an older adult. These theories have been utilized to explain how activities change over the course of an older adults’ life span, and how this in turn influences life satisfaction. Continuity theory suggests that as one ages, one maintains the same type and time involvement in activity, and as a result one maintains a consistent or increased level of life satisfaction. Continuity theory was developed as a response to disengagement theory and activity theory. On the other hand, person-environment fit model attempts to explain how one’s environment fits their physical, mental, and emotional needs as they age, resulting in a maintained level of life

satisfaction. These theories are relevant in that they offer different explanations of how activities impact life satisfaction in an LORC. Both of these theories seek to explain how different levels of activity impact successful aging or life satisfaction.

Continuity Theory

Continuity theory suggests that as an individual ages, she or he will tend to remain engaged in previous activities or replace previous activities with new activities that will maintain or increase her or his life satisfaction. Prior to the development of continuity theory both disengagement and activity theory had been proposed to explain the relationship between activities and life satisfaction. However, both of these theories were limited in explaining activities and life satisfaction in older adults because the theories assumed older adults wanted to either completely disengage from society or be completely engaged in society. Whereas continuity theory suggested one's activities earlier in life serve as an indicator for his or her involvement in activities after retirement.

Cumming and Henry (1961) developed disengagement theory to explain how older adults' age successfully. The theory postulates that as older adults age they disengage or withdraw from society in order to fulfill their ideas of old age (Cumming & Henry, 1961). Cumming and Henry (1961) argued disengagement is a process that every older adult eventually goes through in his or her interactions with society. Thus, the eventual consequence of aging is a new relationship between the older adult and society (Cumming & Henry, 1961). In Figure 2-1, there is a diagram of disengagement theory illustrating the experimental and outcome variables.

According to Cumming and Henry, there are three changes that an older adult goes through as they age. The first is a change in the number of people one engages in communication with and the amount of time the older adult spends engaged in communication (Cumming & Henry, 1961). According to the theory the substance of an older adult's communication with other age

groups changes as one disengages from society (Cumming & Henry, 1961). Additionally, older adults undergo a change in personality that causes decreased involvement in others and more interest in oneself. These findings have recently been reaffirmed by Brown and Lowis (2003), who suggested that as individuals grow older they spend more time reflecting on their lives and as a result disengage from society.

Later research on activities and social connections has utilized many of the same constructs as disengagement theory (Jönson & Magnussen, 2001). Gerotranscendence theory seeks to explain the reason older people change from being more oriented towards possessions, materialism, and pragmatism to a more reflective view of their lives (Tornstam, 1997). This more reflective level that one enters into as they age is described as: a stage where one feels less involved with the outside world and more in tune with oneself (Tornstam, 1996; 1997; Jönson & Magnussen, 2001). The shift to the transcendent view of the world is accompanied with growth towards wholeness and decreased self-centeredness by the individual (Tornstam, 1996; 1997; Jönson & Magnussen, 2001). As with disengagement theory, gerotranscendence theorizes that as individuals age the definition of current activities and relationships and their significance changes. Gerotranscendence further theorizes these changes are accompanied by an older adult's evolution in fulfilling his or her ideas of old age.

Although, not all aspects of disengagement or gerotranscendence theory are relevant in examining the idea of life satisfaction in an LORC; they do help to understand how one may be satisfied with one's life but not as involved in activities. Individuals relocating to an LORC are often leaving homes and communities they have resided in since birth (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005 ; Youngblood, 2005). The process of relocating to an LORC is a process of disengagement from immediate family, extended family, and friends (McHugh & Larson-Keagy,

2005; Youngblood, 2005). Although many individuals in an LORC maintain contact and visit with immediate family on a regular basis; they usually do not see their immediate family as often as where they lived pre- relocation to the LORC (Youngblood, 2005). The process of disengagement or gerotranscendence is more evident in contacts and visits with extended family and friends (Youngblood, 2005).

Activity theory arose as an alternative explanation to disengagement theory to help to understand how activities influence the way people age. Activity theory posits that activity pattern and level, maintaining an equilibrium, and adapting to role loss, as one ages helps to increase life satisfaction. Activity theory consists of three constructs: activity (maintaining a pattern and level), equilibrium (maintaining stability in one's activities), and adapting to role loss (maintaining a similar role as one ages)(Havighurst, Neugarten, & Tobin, 1968; Schulz, 2006).

One of the key constructs identified in activity theory, Figure 2-2, is activity. Activity is defined as, "any form of doing"...It is influenced by two dimensions, level and pattern. (Schulz, 2006, p.10). Level of activity can be viewed as how involved an individual is in an activity; pattern of activity is how often an individual completes an activity. Older adults often experience a change in their level and pattern of activity over their life span (Duke, Leventhal, Brownlee, & Leventhal, 2002; Strain, Grabusic, Searle, & Dunn, 2002). Many factors contribute to an older adult changing their activity (Chen, 2000; Duke et al., 2002; Strain et al.,2002). Although, some individuals retire from their professions, complete the child rearing process, or slow down physically, they still remain active by staying engaged in activities.

Equilibrium as shown in the diagram of activity theory (Figure 2-2) asserts that activity levels and patterns are structured by an individual's needs, and there is no fundamental difference between the needs of a middle age and old age adult (Schulz, 2006). This construct

postulates older individuals should actively try to maintain their social activities from middle age to old age in order to maintain life satisfaction (Havighurst, 1963; Havighurst et al., 1968).

Physical health places limitations on a older adults' ability to maintain equilibrium through the aging process (Lennartsson & Silverstein, 2001; Duke et al., 2002; Strain et al., 2002)

The third construct, adaptation, has been defined as “the process of adjusting to fit a situation or environment” (Atchley, 1994, p.361). As individuals age from middle to old age they are often faced with a number of changes; these changes may include: retirement, relocation, health issues, and loss of family and friends to death. Retirement is one of the biggest experiences most adults go through as they age. In adapting to role loss, individuals replace old roles with new roles in society (Havighurst, 1963). Past research indicates that those who have the most positive attitudes towards their current jobs are often the most likely to have retirement intentions (Adams, Prescher, Beehr, & Lepisto, 2002). The researchers hypothesized that other social roles were contributing to retirement intentions, such as religious roles and parental responsibilities, and these social roles are a way to adapt to the upcoming role loss of retirement (Adams et al., 2002). For example, if an individual used to be an accountant in middle age he or she may volunteer to deal with an organization's finances in old age (Atchley, 1994).

Older adults also replace social roles as an individual's family and friends relocate or die. After the bereavement process has been completed, older adults will often embark on new relationships. New friendships and intimate relationships are often formed among older adults (Connidis, 2001; de Jong Gierveld, 2004). Past research indicates increased life satisfaction, among older adults in regards to these new friendships and intimate relationships (de Jong Gierveld, 2004).

Disengagement and activity theory although sometimes relevant in explaining an older adults post retirement behavior fails to explain how individuals differ and how one's activities change over time. Continuity theory was developed as a response to the growing criticism of disengagement and activity theory (Atchley, 1983; 1989). The diagram, Figure 2-3, illustrates the constructs and outcome of continuity theory. Continuity theory suggests adult development is ongoing (Atchley, 1983; 1989; 1994). It further suggests participation in an activity during the early part of one's life is a strong indicator in their participation in the same activity in the later part of one's life (Agahi, Ahacic, & Parker, 2006). Continuity theory makes the assumption that older adults have formed goals or a developmental direction for themselves which influences their decision making processes (Atchley, 1994). Hence, human beings are constantly undergoing changes and adapting to new situations drawing on past experiences that shape their current actions (Atchley, 1983; 1989). These past experiences form the backbone of patterns individuals use throughout their lives to adapt to changes and reach goals (Atchley, 1994).

This adaptation process continues as individuals enter late life and subsequently lose physical and mental capabilities (Agahi et al., 2006). This adaptation process forms one of the central tenets of continuity theory, adaptive capacity (Atchely, 1989; 1994). Adaptive capacity is the concept that humans are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and thus humans often make the decision to engage in activities that they perceive themselves to be stronger in (Atchley, 1994; 1998). Similar findings about adapting in social relationships were found; these findings suggested as people grow older they seek out relationships that have a positive connotation for them (Cornwell, Laumann, & Schumm, 2008; Cornwell, 2009).

Recent research on retired adults in Israel demonstrates adding new activity in old age increases life satisfaction (Nimrod, 2008a). Nimrod (2008a) found that pre-retirement occupation

and activities highly influenced retirement activities in old age. Nimrod describes two groups of people post retirement: innovators and non-innovators (Nimrod, 2008a). Nimrod (2008b) notes the main difference between innovator and non-innovator groups are pre-retirement occupation and feelings on retirement (Nimrod, 2008b). These findings suggest that as older adults age they continue to maintain previous roles and adapt to new situations in the context of a LORC.

Although, this research focused on older adults in Israel; these findings do leave room for further research on retired adults living in LORCs elsewhere- such as the United States (Nimrod, 2008a).

Current actions, the decision making process, and adaptive capacity in relation to activities may offer some insight on how one's activities in an LORC help to maintain life satisfaction. Continuity theory and later work based on continuity theory may offer some perspective about how older adults view their activities before moving to an LORC and their current activities in the LORC. Many older adults in LORCs express great pride in their previous positions in life (Youngblood, 2005). Continuity theory and later work done by Nimrod (2008a; 2008b) suggests these positions would carry over into retirement in some fashion. For example, an accountant may retire from being an accountant, but he/ she may still handle an organization's finances. Continuity theory asserts that this is because if the activities that one engages in earlier in life help to maintain life satisfaction, fulfillment with one's life, one will continue to engage in them as they age (Atchley, 1983; Maddox, 1987).

Person- Environment Fit Model

Researchers in the past have attempted to explain a person's activities by how well they fit their environment. The idea was first proposed by Lewin (1951). Lewin (1951) theorized that one's behavior is a function of his or her personal experiences and physical environment. This work was later applied to environmental gerontology by several researchers seeking to explain

how environments influence successful aging and life satisfaction (Lawton & Nahemow, 1973; Kahana, 1982; Carp & Carp, 1984).

Person- environment fit model, seen in Figure 2-4, proposes four constructs which influence the outcome variables of residential satisfaction and psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is partially derived from life satisfaction. These four constructs are: personal characteristics, personal preferences, environmental characteristics, and P –E Fit (Kahana, Lovegreen, Kahana, & Kahana, 2003). Each construct is influenced by several sub constructs.

Personal characteristics are defined by demographic characteristics and psychological characteristics. Demographic characteristics are age, gender, race, and education. Psychological characteristics are based on one's personality. The second construct that influences residential satisfaction and psychological well- being are personal preferences. Individuals base their personal preferences on what they want in their physical and social domains. The third construct, environmental characteristics, is what they have or what they perceive to have in their environment. Environment is loosely defined as the opportunities and obstacles that a person faces in obtaining the optimal activity level (Kelly, 1993). Physical domains, part of personal preferences and environmental characteristics, are based on safety, stimulation/ peacefulness, resource amenities, and physical amenities/ aesthetics; while social domains are based on homogeneity/ heterogeneity, and interaction/ solitude. More recent research suggests when older adults engage in increased outdoor activities there are increased physical and psychological benefits (Sugiyama & Thompson, 2007). The fourth construct P-E Fit, is influenced and defined by personal preferences and environmental characteristics. (Kahana et al., 2003; Lawton & Nahemow, 1973; Kahana, 1982; Carp & Carp, 1984). Previous research has shown a casual

connection between life satisfaction and these outcome variables (Mastekaasa & Moum, 1984; Cummins & Nistico, 2002).

An older adults' life satisfaction is heavily impacted by their social environment, which is part of an individual's environmental characteristics (Thomése & Broese van Groenou, 2006). Kahana et al. (2003) found social participation and social homogeneity are extremely important to older adults in relation to their social connections as they age. The importance of social participation is significant because if one does not participate in activities with others; they will not be able to form social connections. While social homogeneity is significant in forming social connections because of the importance individuals place on personal characteristics in forming social connections. This social environment is based on the social connections older adults make as they age; these connections often form the backbone of a care group (Kahanah et al., 2003; Thomése & Broese van Groenou, 2006). Social connections are often found in LORCs, where research has shown that older adults seek independence (Kahana et al., 2003; Youngblood, 2005).

Summary

LORCs present older adults with an environment that offers grocery stores, pharmacies, medical care, and numerous other amenities. They also provide residents with numerous social, physical, and leisure activities. The impact that these community-facilitated activities have on a resident's life satisfaction has never been measured. The two theories reviewed above attempt to explain successful aging or life satisfaction through activities. Continuity theory proposes that if one maintains a continuous level of activity as one ages, life satisfaction will remain the same. Person-environment fit model suggests that if a person's environment meets her or his personal characteristics, personal preferences, and environmental characteristics: it will meet her or his physical, mental, and emotional needs as he or she ages, eventually resulting in a maintained

level of life satisfaction. Both of these theories have been used to explain how activities have a causal relationship with successful aging and life satisfaction among older adults. However, these theories have not been applied in LORCs. The goal of this research is to utilize the following theories to try to understand how activities influence life satisfaction in a LORC. One of the limitations of previous research on the relationship between activities and life satisfaction is gender (Russel, 2007; Wray, 2004; Stanley & Freysinger, 1995).

Characteristics of Females as They Age

Previous research has established that there is a difference between males and females with respect to participation in activities and successful aging (Russell, 2007). Although, women vary on what they define as successful aging, Wray (2004) found that, “Women use different strategies to pursue active lives and remain in control, as they grow older” (p. 15). This means as women grow older they choose the activity in which they participate.

Past research on the differences of males and females as they age has found that females enjoy participating in activities more than males (Son, Kerstetter, Yarnal, & Baker, 2007). Furthermore, these activities provide a social network for females as the age. These social networks offer females a set of friends to rely on during significant life events, and they also give females the chance to engage in creative and non-binding activities. Russell (2007) and Williamson (2000), found that 2/3 of participants in assisted living activities were female; these findings may be explained by a male’s participation in more solitary activities (Russell, 2007).

Males showed higher signs of disengagement as they aged. Males became less interested in social connections and activities (Stanley & Freysinger, 1995). These findings were further confirmed through research on adaptive capacity in older males (Genoe & Singleton, 2006). They found as older males age they are more likely to give up some activities due to physical limitations; however, they sometimes replace this loss with an activity they already take part in

(they simply increase the amount of time in activity a with a loss in activity b) (Genoe & Singleton, 2006).

In relation to successful aging females often feel that aging successfully is a choice (Rossen, Knafl, & Flood, 2008). Females attribute successful aging to a successful late life transition (Rossen et al., 2008). Hence, some studies suggest that older females adjust better because they are more likely to accept changes in their physical abilities, relationships, and their environment (Rossen et al., 2008). Given these differences between males and females as they age it is imperative to look at how activities in an LORC influence life satisfaction by examining one gender first.

Purpose

Past research has suggested there are distinct demographic trends that have emerged in LORCs across the country (Townshend, 2002; Moschis et al., 2005; McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005; Longino & Manheimer, 1995; He & Schachter, 2003; Youngblood, 2005). Based on this information and past research on continuity theory and person- environment fit model, one could surmise there is a positive relationship between successful aging or life satisfaction and activities when healthy older adults move into LORCs (Nimrod, 2008a; Thomése & Broese van Groenou, 2006). This research will help to indentify the relationship between activities in an LORC and life satisfaction. In order to identify activities and how they influence life satisfaction in a LORC, the research will utilize several in- depth semi structured interviews. The objective of the interviews is to determine:

Before moving to this LORC how did social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction?;

How do the LORC's facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction?;

How has life satisfaction changed since moving to this LORC?

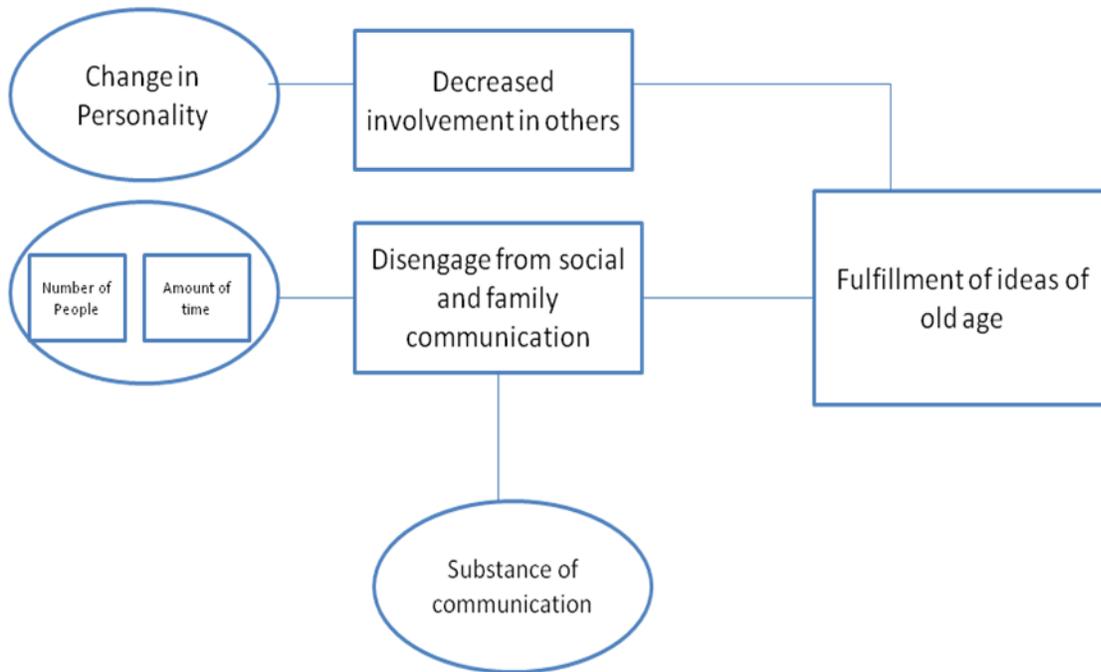


Figure 2-1. Diagram of Disengagement Theory

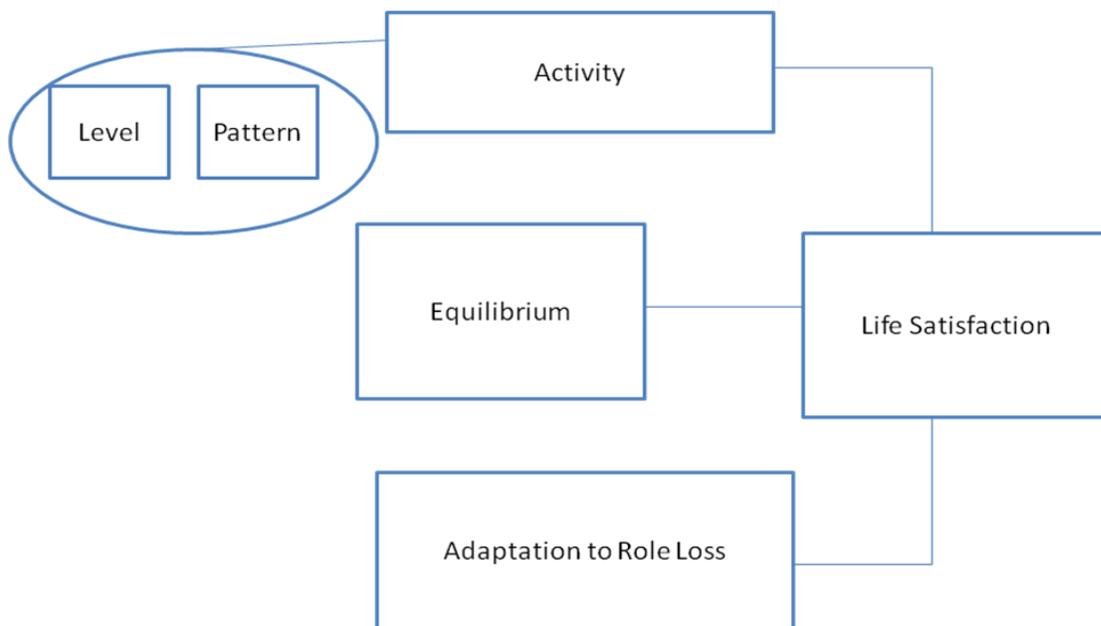


Figure 2-2. Diagram of Activity Theory

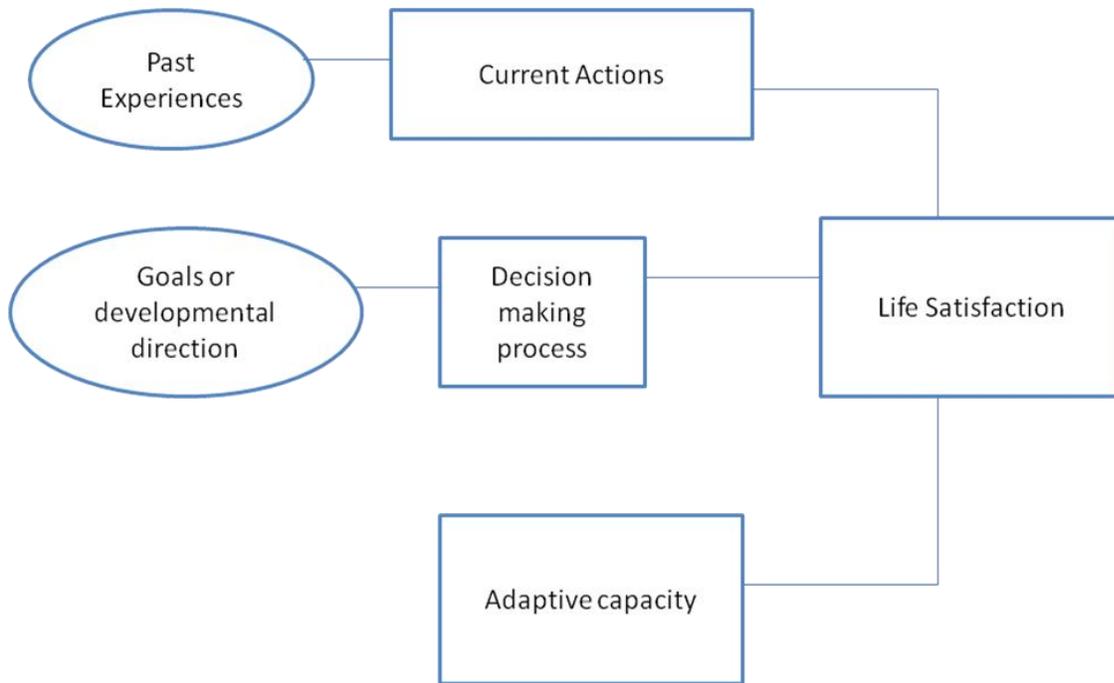


Figure 2-3. Diagram of Continuity Theory

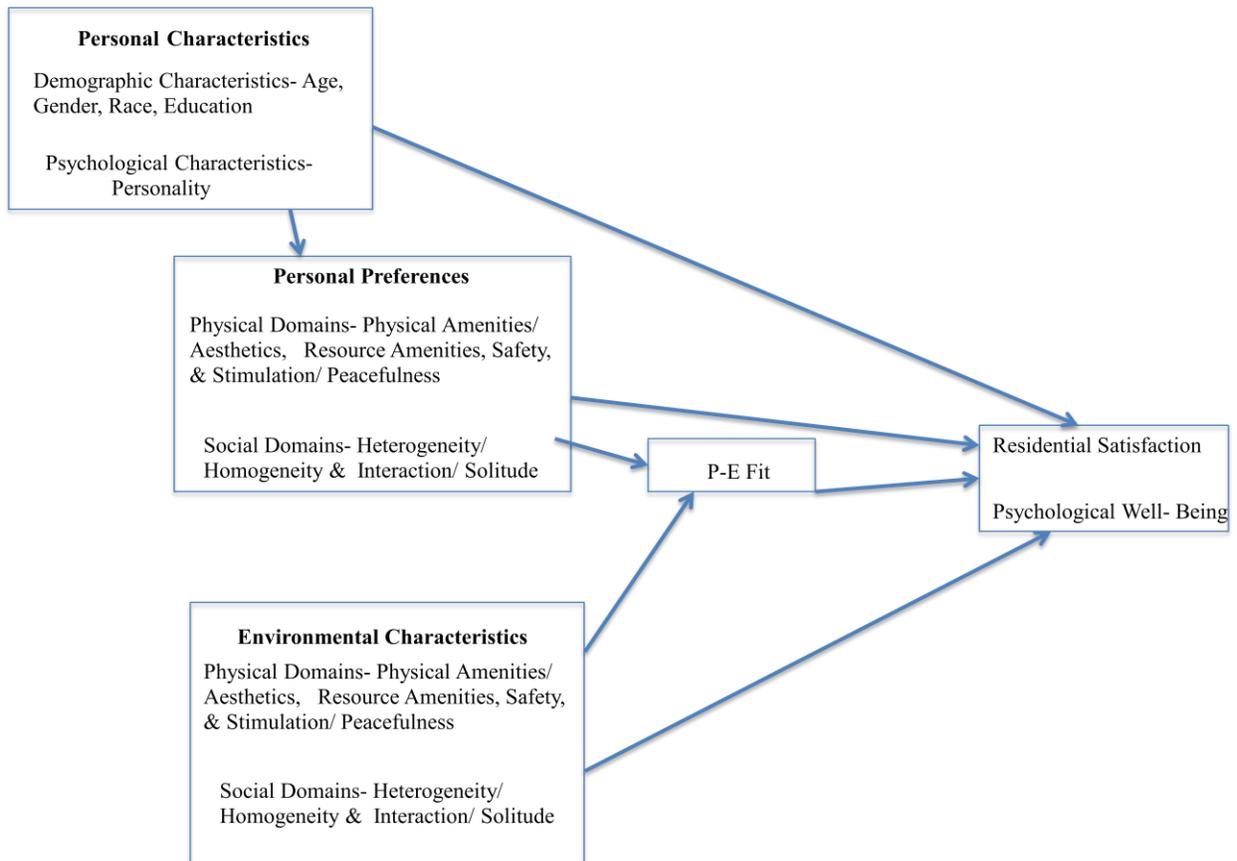


Figure 2-4. Diagram of Person-Environment Fit Model

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine: (1) Before moving to this LORC how did social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction? (2) How do the LORC's facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction? (3) How has life satisfaction changed since moving to this LORC? A demographic questionnaire, satisfaction with life scale, and a qualitative interview were employed to obtain in-depth information about the women's feelings and experiences with relation to activities in the context of an LORC. The methodology utilized in the research process is described below.

Design

This study utilized a cross sectional qualitative approach. This cross sectional approach was selected due to its ability to explain association between variables in a relatively short period of time (de Vaus, 2001). The quantitative instruments were used to add a depth of understanding to the results. By utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods the research design employs triangulation, complementarity, and the ability to further expand on results and findings (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). Triangulation allows the researcher the ability to establish a level of consistency between the quantitative and qualitative methods (Greene et al., 1989; Yin, 2008). Use of the quantitative instruments allows the researcher to establish complementarity, or clarify, findings in the qualitative portion of the results by utilizing quantitative findings (Greene et al., 1989). By utilizing quantitative measures there was a better understanding of the results (Greene et al., 1989).

Research Setting

The research setting was one of the largest LORCs in the state of Florida. It is located in north central Florida, approximately 55 miles north of Orlando and 25 miles south of Ocala. The

research setting geographically encompasses three counties: Lake, Marion, and Sumter counties. There are several natural areas located throughout the LORC; however, the community has been very well developed. Similar to other LORCs, this LORC offers its residents many amenities. Residents of this LORC have access to an onsite medical facility, a wide selection of doctors, shopping, and a wide variety of restaurants. The community is golf cart friendly, resulting in an infrastructure that is designed to support the use of golf carts as a main mode of transportation to keep the residents mobile and independent even after they can no longer drive a vehicle. As of 2009, home prices in this LORC ranged from \$80,000 for a mobile home located in an older section of the LORC to over \$1,000,000 for a custom built home in a newer area.

The most current U.S census data lists the total population as 8,333 (U.S. Census, 2000). The 2000 Census listed the community's population as 52.4% female and 47.6% male. The LORC has a median age of 66.3 (U.S. Census, 2003). The Census (2000) listed the population of the community as 98.4% White, and the remaining 1.6% of the population was comprised of Multi-racial, Blacks, Asians, American Indians, Pacific Islanders, and some other races. Only 5.8% of the population of the LORC reported being foreign born compared to the national average of 11.1% (U.S. Census, 2000). The median value of a home in the LORC was \$136,100 compared to the state average in Florida of \$105,500 (U.S. Census, 2000). More current information was not available from the U.S. Census on this LORC. However, the LORC's own data sources state the population was 47,000 in 2004, and the projected population in January 2010 was 78,000 (The Villages, 2010).

Sampling and Recruitment Procedure

The research focused on a theoretical population consisting of all females living in any LORC between the ages of 60-75. The theoretical sample of the LORC where this research was conducted was all female residents between the ages of 60-75. This theoretical sample is a good

representation of female residents of an LORC because it is one of the largest LORCs in the United States. This community accurately represents other LORCs across the United States because of its large population, wide variety of amenities, and vast geographic area. This LORC offers the same amenities that comprise most LORCs. However, the results and conclusions reached in this study cannot be generalized to the theoretical population or theoretical sample due to the limitations of the twelve person volunteer sample.

In order to select a sampling frame from the theoretical sample, I contacted four primary sources who lived in the LORC. The four primary sources did not know each other minimizing the possibility of duplication. The four sources were asked to introduce the study topic to four or five residents. The four initial sources were asked to find people of varying experiences and opinions of life at this LORC. The primary sources provided residents with information regarding the researcher's intended project and contact information so they could contact the researcher via email or telephone. A resident who was interested in participating in the study made direct contact with the researcher. Participants contacted the researcher via phone or email. During the phone and/or email conversations with the potential participants—the researcher confirmed that the person met the inclusion criteria: the person was a female, between the ages of 60-75, was a full time resident of the LORC (lived there at least nine months out of the year), and had lived in the LORC for the past twelve months. If the participants met the inclusion criteria they were told more about the project, time commitment of one hour to one hour and a half, and compensation for participation in the interview. If potential participants met the inclusion criteria and were interested in participating, an appointment to conduct the research was scheduled. All participants were told in advance that they would be compensated for their time commitment in the form of a \$10 grocery store gift card.

Sample

The sampling frame was comprised of twelve female residents of this LORC. The sample was collected using a volunteer sample. A volunteer sample was selected as the way of recruitment for participants due to the restricted access to the wider population. Steps were taken to minimize the bias introduced by a volunteer sample by selecting participants with a range of experiences and opinions about living at this LORC. The sampling frame was screened based on gender, age, full time residency, and length of residency. Gender was part of the exclusion criteria due to the impact it has on participation in activities (Russell, 2007; Son et al., 2007; Rossen et al., 2008). Women are twice as likely to participate in activities than men (Russell, 2007; Son et al., 2007; Rossen et al., 2008). Hence, women have a broader view of the activities provided in their previous communities and an LORC. The sampling frame also used age as a selection criterion. This criteria was established and included to control influences on the differences participants might have with respect to their current lives, gender roles, past experiences, and health changes that normally onset with age. Participants were also screened for full time residency. Full time residency for the purpose of this project was defined as a person who resides in the LORC for nine months or more of the year. This inclusion criteria was established to eliminate outside effects such as increased family interaction or differences that might arise that would have a significant impact on an individual. Participants were also selected by when they moved into the LORC. The exclusion criteria eliminated potential participants who had lived in the LORC for less than twelve months. This criteria was established in order to help eliminate the effect of a honeymoon period for new residents of the LORC.

Methods

The primary data collection method was an in-depth semi structured interview. All the interviews were conducted by the primary researcher, who was a 23 year old White female. The

in-depth semi structured interview was employed because of its use of, “open ended questions [that] are developed in advance along with prepared probes. Unplanned, unanticipated probes may also be used” (Morse & Richards, 2002, p.91). It is important to note the researcher maintained flexibility in regards to interview questions using a procedure that sometimes called for modifying or adding additional probing questions to the interview protocol based on participant responses (Yin, 2008). Subsequent methods used to substantiate data collected in the in-depth semi structured interview included a demographic questionnaire and a Satisfaction with Life Scale.

Procedure

The interview was conducted in a public library located near the LORC. The library was chosen specifically for the amenity of a quiet discussion room and close proximity to the LORC. A library location was selected to enable the participants to share information in a private, non-distracting, and non-threatening location.

The participants were met at the entrance to the library and escorted to the conference room. There was no one else present in the room except for the participant and the researcher. The participants were reminded of the topic of the research and were then invited to sit and make themselves comfortable. The participants were given the following information during the interview: the informed consent, a demographic questionnaire, a Satisfaction With Life Scale, and a thank you note with the compensation attached. The participants were told about the key elements of the informed consent: basic information about the study, the amount of time the study required, the interview recording process, confidentiality in regards to their responses, their rights as a research participant to not answer any question or withdraw from the study at any point, and that the project had been approved by the University of Florida’s Institutional Review Board. The participants were then given the informed consent. The participants were given time

to read the informed consent. A signed copy was returned to the researcher and participants retained a copy for their records.

The first step of the interview involved the completion of a brief paper-pencil demographic questionnaire. The second step of the interview was the completion of a five item Satisfaction With Life Scale. When that was finished, the researcher began the in-depth semi structured interview. Participants were informed once more that the interview would be recorded. The interviews were recorded using two small MP3 recording devices. Two devices were used to ensure the interview was captured. The recording devices were placed openly on the table to prevent the participants from forgetting the conversation was being recorded. The participants were then asked a series of in-depth semi structured interview questions. The in-depth semi structured interview ranged from 60-80 minutes. The script and protocol were kept structured, and the researcher maintained a professional demeanor when talking with participants. In order to maintain a professional demeanor several guidelines were followed, which included: adhering to the one hour to one hour and a half timeline for the interview, the ability of the researcher to gain the participants' trust, sensitivity and genuine interest in the participants' answers, and an understanding and respect of the participants' cultural and normative beliefs (Rowels & Schoenberg, 2002). At the end of the interview the MP3 recorders were turned off. The participants were thanked for their participation and asked if they had any additional questions. They were reminded to take their copy of the informed consent and thank you note with the compensation attached.

Instrumentation

The methods for this study were a demographic questionnaire, a Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, 1984; Diener, et al., 1985), and an in-depth interview. A demographic questionnaire was used to collect background information about the respondents. The

Satisfaction with Life Scale was utilized to better understand the respondent's feelings on life satisfaction. Observations the researcher made on three different visits to the LORC helped to formulate the qualitative interview questions and provide a context for the participant's responses. An in-depth interview was chosen as the primary method of this research study. It enabled the researcher to ask more in depth questions and get a deeper understanding of the respondent's answers.

Quantitative Measures

Demographic questionnaire

As part of the interview process the participants were given a demographic questionnaire. All participants were given demographic questionnaires (Appendix D). The questionnaire asked information about: race, self rated health, marital status, level of education, spouse's level of education, parental status, number of children, value of their home, when they moved to the LORC, and where they moved from. Race, marital status, and parental status were identified using a nominal scale. Self rated health, level of education, spouse's level of education, number of children, and value of one's home were all measured using interval/ ratio scales. Open ended fill in the blank items were used to identify length of residency in the LORC and prior location and length of residency at that location.

Satisfaction with life scale

The participants were given the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) (Appendix E). The SWLS is a five item Likert scale with potential responses, ranging from 5 to 35 (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1985). The higher a participant's score on the scale the higher their self reported life satisfaction. The scale was chosen because it was brief and relatively easy for respondents to answer (Diener et al., 1985; Rejeski & Mihalko, 2001). The items of the scale ask about the following aspects of overall life satisfaction: (1) In most ways my life is close to ideal. (2) The

conditions of my life are excellent. (3) I am satisfied with my life. (4) So far I have gotten the important things I want in life. (5) If I could live my life over I would change almost nothing. The scale has been extremely well utilized and reliable in measuring life satisfaction among older adults (Diener et al., 1985; McAuley, Blissmer, Marquez, Jerome, Kramer, & Katula, 2000; Rejeski & Mihalko, 2001). The reliability coefficient of this scale is .82 (Diener et al., 1985; Rejeski & Mihalko, 2001). The SWLS has a high degree of internal validity among the five items when tested by two different researchers working with older females (Diener et al., 1985). The item-total correlation for the five item scale is as follows:(1) .81, (2) .63 (3) .61 (4).75 (5) .66 (Diener et al., 1985). Cronbach's alpha for the sample of this study could not be calculated because the overall life satisfaction of this sample was very high resulting in a range of responses that mainly fell between five and seven on a seven point scale.

Qualitative Measures: In-Depth Interview

Interviews provided a targeted and insightful method for obtaining data (Tellis, 1997). The type of questions asked were open ended and allowed the participants to express their opinion, allowing the researcher to be able to classify each case based on the participants' responses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Morse, 2002).

Observations and informal conversations were utilized to help inform the research questions, and helped to provide a context for the participants' responses. I visited the LORC on several occasions prior to the study. I took a developer-sponsored tour of the LORC. During the visits I visited both of the community centers, and drove around the LORC on my own. On these visits I took notes on community-facilitated activities and amenities offered by the LORC. Additional information was also gathered about activities and life in the LORC through personal contacts with residents living in the community. These observations were used as a basis for question development in the in-depth semi structured interview. In an effort to supplement and

substantiate the interview data, I visited the LORC on three occasions before conducting the research. These observations also helped form a more holistic view of the participant responses.

Activity and continuity theory reviewed in chapter two also provided a basis for the in-depth interview questions. Activity and continuity theory both focus on an individual's activities and life satisfaction through out their life span. The questions used during the in-depth interview asked the participants about their social, physical, and leisure activities prior to and since moving to the LORC and how this impacted life satisfaction. These questions were based on the three main research questions. Questions based on research question one and two seek to understand a participant's activities before and since moving to the LORC, and how these activities impacted their life satisfaction. These questions were developed based on one's past participation in activities and how this influenced their life satisfaction. These questions were based on the activity theory constructs of: activity level and pattern, maintaining a equilibrium, and adapting to role loss. They were also based on the three constructs of continuity theory: current actions, which are based on past actions, decision making process which is part of one's goal or developmental direction, and adaptive capacity. Research question three asked participants about how their life satisfaction has changed since moving to the LORC. These questions were based on the outcome variable of life satisfaction in both activity and continuity theory.

Before the research questions were addressed in the interview, it was important to establish how the respondents defined social, physical, and leisure activities. Respondents were asked if they agreed to an already established definition of the type of activity. For example, respondents were asked this series of questions about social activities: Previous research has defined social activities as a set of interactions and relationships between people. How does your definition of social activities differ? Respondents were then asked if they would list some social activities, and

identify the social activities they participated in. Respondents were also asked if they felt social activities were related to physical and leisure activities. A similar series of questions was asked about physical and leisure activities. The entire set of interview questions can be found in Appendix F.

Research question one asks, before moving to this LORC how did social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction? In order to answer these questions respondents were asked a series of questions on their activities and how it impacted life satisfaction before moving to the LORC. For example, respondents were asked this series of questions about social activities. How would you describe your participation in social activities before you moved to the LORC? How often did you engage in these activities? If the respondent answered did not participate, why did you not participate? How did social activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to this LORC?

The second research question asks how do the LORC's facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction? The respondents were asked a series of questions about their current activities (with particular interest in those activities that were in some way facilitated by the LORC) and how they impacted their life satisfaction. For example, respondents were asked this series of questions about their current social activities. How would you describe your participation in social activities at this LORC? How often do you engage in these activities? If the respondent answered do not participate, why do you not participate? How do this LORCs' supported social activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

The third research question was, how has life satisfaction changed since moving to this LORC? In order to establish this the respondents were asked to answer a series of questions about how activities influence life satisfaction. For example, respondents were asked these two

questions about life satisfaction with respect to social activities: (1) How did social activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to this LORC? and (2) How do this LORC's supported social activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

The instruments were tested using pilot testing. Three females who were between the ages of 60-75 who lived in a LORC were asked to complete the demographic questionnaire and in-depth semi structured interview in the same context as the protocol above suggests. Pilot testing was used to further refine the data collection process and instruments (Yin, 2003; 2008). All of the women lived in a LORC full time, and had been living there for longer than twelve months. The pilot participants were aware that their responses and interviews would not be used in the study, but only to further refine the data collection process and instruments. Pilot respondents were queried about each question that appeared in the semi structured interview (Appendix G). Responses were examined and questions were eliminated based on the responses and feedback given during pilot testing.

Analysis

The process of generating a theory to fit the emergent themes is known as grounded theory development. When conducting grounded theory research the researcher engages in a process that includes coding, categorizing, development of themes, and establishing a relevant theory. Grounded theory research is the process by which a researcher utilizes themes developed from the interviews to explain the phenomenon occurring in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This phenomenon will later be explained by a theory. To develop these themes I engaged in a process known as manifest content analysis. Manifest content analysis refers to the process a researcher engages in when he or she describes the, "visible, obvious components..." of the text (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004, p. 106). Categories are then developed from coded words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. A category is when words, phrases, sentences, and

paragraphs consist of the same characteristics (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). After establishing a set of categories the next step in grounded theory research is the development of themes. The constant comparison method is when the researcher is constantly asking how this theme, phrase, or sentence fits or what the participant was trying to say (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The themes developed throughout the research process should lead to the establishment of an overarching theory.

In this study I utilized the process described above to establish codes, categories, and themes. A theory was used to explain how the themes were connected. The recordings were transcribed and rechecked twice. This was done to ensure no mistakes were made in transcribing the interviews. The transcriptions were then read three times to gain a thorough understanding of the text and its meaning. I used sentences and phrases to achieve manifest content analysis (Feeley & Gottlieb, 1998). Several codes were developed during manifest content analysis. Examples of some of the codes derived from manifest content analysis were: “I mean if you are unhappy here it is your own fault “, “My activities here are much better than they were before”, “I think of this LORC as heaven”, and “Activities have improved our quality of life”. After identifying the codes I grouped the units of analysis together to form a category. I developed some core categories after reviewing the transcripts three times. Based on the data and reviewing the interview questions I was able to devise categories. The categories were made up of sentences and phrases consisting of similar ideas or sentiments about the same topic. A few core categories were utilized at first, but after reviewing the material I was able to develop more categories. These categories were constantly utilized with the constant comparison method that was used to develop themes. The themes were eventually used to identify a theory that would help to explain the themes.

In order to ensure reliability and consistency among the codes, categories, and themes two gerontologists and myself engaged in the constant comparative method. The constant comparative method is a four step process: “(1) comparing incidents applicable to each other, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory” (Glaser, 1965, p. 439). One gerontologist held an advanced degree in gerontology and had 25 years of work experience in the field. The other gerontologist who served as a reviewer was a recent graduate of a dual master’s program in public health and psychology with a focus on gerontology. Both were given the set of transcripts and categories. The reviewers followed the same steps as the researcher, by reviewing the transcripts, coding, categorizing, and developing themes . A percent agreement system was used to establish concurrence among the codes, categories, and themes. The first reviewer and the researcher had a 71% agreement between how the codes were placed into the categories. While the second reviewer and the researcher had a 75% agreement between how the codes were placed into the categories. The researcher discussed the similarities and differences between her codes and categories and the others’ codes and categories. These differences were taken into account when finalizing the codes and categories. After constant comparison was used between the researcher and the reviewers the percent agreement between the codes and categories was 91% and 96%, respectively. The researcher also asked the reviewers to place the categories into themes. There was an initial agreement of 85% and 89% respectively; however, after some discussion a percent agreement of 97% and 95% was reached. This process provided a system to check the coding, categories, and themes, which provided a layer of accuracy to the data analysis process (Armstrong, Gosling, Weinman, & Martaeu, 1997). By having two gerontologists review the raw data and categories I

had a better understanding of the findings, and I was better able to control for my own subjectivity (Armstrong et al., 1997).

CHAPTER 4 STUDY RESULTS

In depth personal interviews were conducted at the Lady Lake Library. The goal of these interviews was to reach conclusions on the three principal research questions, which were: (1) Before moving to this LORC how did social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction? (2) How do the LORC's facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction? (3) How has life satisfaction changed since moving to this LORC? The interviews lasted 60 - 90 minutes. Respondents were asked to complete a demographic questionnaire and a Satisfaction with Life Scale. They were then asked a series of questions on activities and life satisfaction. The semi-structured in depth interviews were divided into three sections based on the type of activity: social activity, physical activity, and leisure activity. Coding and manifest content analysis of the data indicated one central theory that could be used to explain the emergent themes.

Quantitative Results

Results of Demographic Questionnaire

All of the respondents completed the demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire asked the respondents questions about: race, self rated overall health, relationship status, education, partner's education (if applicable), number of children (if applicable), how many times a year they see their children (if applicable), the value of their home, when they purchased it, when they moved to this LORC, where they lived before moving to this LORC, and how long they lived in that location before moving to this LORC.

All of the respondents self-identified as White. This respondent sample is in line with the population of this LORC (U.S. Census, 2000) which is 98.5% White. Figure 4-1 depicts how respondents rated their overall health. As depicted in Figure 4-1 all respondents rated their health

as about the same as their peers, better, or much better. Respondents in this study had a very high self rated overall health, however, this is common among older females (Ferraro, 1980; Larue, Banks, Jarvik, & Hetland, 1979). Past research suggests older females tend to inflate their overall self rated health (Ferraro, 1980; Larue, et al., 1979). Nine of the respondents indicated that they were married, one of the respondents indicated she was widowed, one respondent indicated she was single (never married), and another respondent indicated she was divorced. Respondents also answered questions about their level and their partner's level of education. Figure 4-2 illustrates these findings, the respondents are depicted in grey and their partner's are depicted in blue. Ten of the women recorded that they had one or more children. These women indicated that they saw at least one of their children once a year or more, but this varied on how far the adult child lived from the LORC. The women also indicated where they had lived before moving to this LORC. Many of the women lived in several different places before moving to this LORC; however, just the last place they lived before moving to this LORC is displayed in Table 4-1. The women had lived an average of 39 years in their previous locations. As depicted in Table 4-1 the majority of the women were from Florida, the Midwest, or the Northeast. This is consistent with demographic information for the state of Florida which notes the highest levels of out moving interstate migration of older adults were from the Midwest and Northeast (He & Schachter, 2003).

Results of Satisfaction with Life Scale

Eleven out of the twelve respondents completed the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The average summative score on the SWLS was 29.55. The highest possible score was 35. In preliminary testing of the SWLS on older adult females living in various residential situations the average score was 25.8 (Diener et al., 1985; Pavok, Diener, Colvin, & Sandvik, 1991). However, one respondent was unable to answer an item on the SWLS. Therefore, the average score and

standard deviation for each item is also displayed: (Item 1) $M=6.0833$ and $SD=.28868$, (Item 2) $M= 5.8333$ and $SD=.38925$, (Item 3) $M= 6.2500$ and $SD= .45227$, (Item 4) $M=6.1818$ and $SD=.60302$, and (Item 5) $M= 5.2500$ and $SD= 1.48477$. These results are also higher than results found in a previous study of older females that utilized the SWLS average score; the scores on average were approximately one point higher than the previous study (McAuley, Konopack, Motl, Morris, Doerksen, & Rosengren, 2006). In comparison to previous studies on older females this sample had a very high life satisfaction score (McAuley, et al., 2006).

Summary of Quantitative Results

The findings of the demographic results are consistent with previous findings in LORCs. All twelve of the respondents identified as White, this was consistent with the most recent racial demographic information on this LORC, which was 98.5% White (U.S. Census, 2000). These findings are also consistent with past research on other LORCs which suggests these communities are predominantly White homogenous societies (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). The sample also had high self perceived health; this was consistent with other females in this age group (Ferraro, 1980; Larue, et al., 1979). The sample lived on average 39 years in their past location, and were mainly from the Northeast, Midwest, and Florida. These findings are consistent on retirees in Florida (He & Schachter, 2003). Additionally, these findings are consistent with past research on LORCs suggesting the residents are mainly from the Northeast and Midwest (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). The SWLS indicated the women in this sample of this LORC had a very high satisfaction with life. Overall, this sample can be characterized as predominantly White with a high self perceived health and satisfaction with life score.

Qualitative Analysis

The reviewers and I identified 46 codes through manifest content analysis. These codes were collapsed into 26 categories. Ten themes were then identified and these themes were then further refined into three constructs that correspond to a central theory of this study. The next section will expand on the process that identified these codes, categories, themes, and constructs helping to explain a central theory of this study.

Coding

After reviewing the transcripts three times the text was coded. The coding process identified phrases and sentences that were alike, and portrayed what the author and reviewers identified as the central ideas used to answer the qualitative questions. Examples of some of the coded text includes: “I mean if you are unhappy here it is your own fault “, “My activities here are much better than they were before”, “I think of this LORC as heaven”, and “Activities have improved our quality of life”. Coding was based on the participant’s activities and life satisfaction before and since moving to this LORC.

Categories

The 46 codes were then condensed into 26 categories. Codes became overall explanations of a phenomenon. Codes such as, “We were extremely fortunate with the neighborhood we got into” and “It is amazing how appealing they work to make this place” made up the category neighborhoods. Some of the other categories included were (See Appendix J for complete list of categories and codes): changes in social activities, comparisons between the LORC and previous home, how the three types of activities interact, negative aspects of the LORC, neighbors, negative aspects of physical activity in the LORC, involvement in leisure activities at the LORC, leisure activities before moving to the LORC, how leisure activities influenced life satisfaction before moving to the LORC, and how leisure activities influence life satisfaction in the LORC.

Themes

The categories were further collapsed into themes. I identified ten themes that emerged from the 26 categories listed above. These themes are: continuity in involvement in social, physical, and leisure activities, the importance of neighbors/ structure of the neighborhood, not being defined by typical definitions of social, physical, and leisure activities, freedom of choice in activities and people you want to participate with, feeling not skilled enough to participate, convenience of facilities, convenience of activities, losing contact with friends and family in different locations, became more involved with one activity, social contacts, and maintained or increased life satisfaction. The themes were formed by using categories, for example, neighbors/ structure of the neighborhood emerged from the categories: comparisons between the LORC and previous home, negative aspects of the LORC, and neighbors. After reviewing these themes with the reviewers losing contact with friends and family in different locations was combined with freedom of choice in activities and people you want to participate with. I decided to combine these themes because they both concerned choice in social connections.

Central Theory

Upon completion of manifest content analysis I examined several theories that could help to encompass the ten themes identified above. Although the research and in-depth interview questions were based on activity and continuity theory; the themes are best described using two theories: person-environment fit model to explain the ecological context of the data and continuity theory which offers an explanation of the central phenomenon of the study. Together these theories offer an explanation of how activities influence life satisfaction in the context of an LORC. The constructs of continuity theory suggest one's activities are influenced by their past activities and this in turn influences life satisfaction. Many of the themes in the data seem to indicate the construct of continuity theory. However, to better understand this theory in the

context of an LORC, person-environment fit model seemed to offer an explanation. Person-environment fit model sought to explain how one's activities and life satisfaction may be impacted by one's environment.

In continuity theory there are three constructs that influence life satisfaction. These constructs are identified in Figure 4-3. Current actions are one of the three constructs that influence life satisfaction (Atchley, 1983; 1989). Current actions are defined as activities one is currently participating in which are influenced by one's past experiences and life events (Atchley 1983; 1989). Decision making process is defined as the choices one makes which are influenced by one's goals or developmental direction. This influences how an individual maintains equilibrium in their life satisfaction. One's goals or developmental direction impacts how an older adult makes decisions (Atchley, 1994). The third construct identified in continuity theory was adaptive capacity. Adaptive capacity is the process in which an older adult continues only in activities he or she perceives himself or herself to be stronger in as they age. Adaptive capacity influences the maintenance of life satisfaction with the assumption that as one ages one participates in activities that demonstrate strength and maintain relationships that are more rewarding (Atchley, 1994; 1998; Cornwell, Laumann, & Schumm, 2008; Cornwell, 2009). Table 4-2 depicts how certain themes combine to illustrate a construct.

Person-environment fit model provided a context for understanding how one's continuation in activities is supported by their fit to their environment. When examining some themes I noted how these themes were reflective of two constructs from person-environment fit model. These two constructs of person-environment fit model assisted me in contextualizing certain constructs of continuity theory. Personal characteristics and environmental characteristics

are helpful in understanding current actions and adaptive capacity in the research context. The diagram shown in Figure 4-4 illustrates person-environment fit model.

Current Actions

According to Continuity Theory, current actions are influenced by past experiences. The construct of current actions in continuity theory suggests participation in an activity during the early part of one's life is a strong indicator in their participation in the same activity in the later part of life (Agahi, Ahacic, & Parker, 2006). Atchley (1994) further suggests that this continuation in activities from early life to late life shapes how individuals adapt to changes and reach accomplishments.

When examining the emergent codes, categories, and themes I noted continuity in involvement in social, physical, and leisure activities, social contacts, and maintained or increased life satisfaction together were suggestive of one's current actions, and how current actions are influenced by past experiences. Continuity in involvement in social, physical, and leisure activities refers to a participant's continuation in activities since moving to an LORC. While social contacts refers to one's increase in social connections since relocating to the LORC.

Continuation in activities was not limited to any activity but instead encompassed the majority of a participant's activity. This continuity stemmed from earlier experiences in life that helped participants determine their current actions.

Alice, a retired public school teacher, spoke about how much she loved teaching and stated that after moving to this LORC a great deal of her time had been spent volunteering at a local elementary school. She explained that was part of who she was. She stated, "I loved teaching... In fact when I go to the charter school and meet the children, and they asked me why I come here, I go because I live in [the LORC] and I love kids."

This continuation in activities was not simply found in women who had worked outside of the home full time, but also in women who had spent most of their adult lives working inside of the home.

Cathy, who has been a stay at home mom for most of her adult life before moving to the LORC explained she was always very involved in activities, but the LORC had simply accelerated that process. She stated, “Well I was pretty much the social organizer then as I am now... I was already on that track and this [the LORC] just made it easier and perhaps more certainly more available...”

Participants also explained that their continuation in activities was not just confined to their social activities but also to their physical and leisure activities. Participants reported they were more involved in physical activities since moving to the LORC. Most of the participants noted this was due to the availability and convenience of the activities and having more free time due to retirement.

Elizabeth a retiree from the Midwest noted her participation in physical activities had increased due to the amount of activities and the right environment. She stated her participation, “has increased because there were more opportunities, more time, and the weather is perfect.”

Participants also noted their leisure activities had stayed consistent since moving to the LORC. They said most of their current leisure activities were based on activities they participated in before moving to the LORC. This is consistent with current actions being influenced by past experiences.

Many of the residents noted their current activities which were based on their past activities really influenced how satisfied they were with life at the LORC.

Mary a former stay at home mom from the Northeast noted that she kept busy raising her children and with social, physical, and leisure activities. She thought she was satisfied, but after moving to this LORC she realized there were so many more options. Mary stated, “I thought I was satisfied then. I thought I filled my days. Making my self useful. And having things to look forward to, but because there are so many more options here. You realize that life there really wasn't as fulfilling.”

Social contact is one of the themes mentioned above as illustrating current actions. I noted most of the respondents gained social contacts after moving to the LORC. Respondents noted these social contacts were often similar to those they had before moving to the LORC. However, many of the respondents noted that these new friends had more in common with them. Many respondents felt this was because the LORC offered such a variety of individuals to be friends with.

Opal a retiree from a large city in the Northeast stated she could always find multiple people willing to participate in card games or social outings. And if she got tired of one group of people there were several different people who would be willing to participate in card games or social outings. She felt this provided her with numerous options for social contact, and she listed this as one of the main contributors to her life satisfaction. She also said when looking at retirement housing options the availability of social contact was one of the main reasons she moved to this LORC. She stated the abundance of social contact options was in vast contrast to her past home where she had very little social contact options.

This response as well as several other responses mirrored how previous experiences with social contacts can influence current actions. Participants suggested the LORC offered them so much in terms of social contact availability and friendliness that it helped influence their life satisfaction.

Cathy, a stay at home mom, who was very involved in civic activities before moving to the LORC, stated this about her social contacts in the LORC, “I think the people make it easy to involve yourself, because everybody seems to be very welcoming when you get involved in a new activity, they are always looking for new people, they are not exclusive, they are inclusive... I think for an activity to be pleasurable you want to feel you are wanted, and your participation is welcomed...”

Decision Making Processes

The decision making process is driven by established goals or an established developmental direction (Atchley, 1983; 1989; 1994; Figure 4-3). I found: freedom of choice in activities and freedom of choice of people you want to participate with, feeling not skilled enough to participate, and maintained or increased life satisfaction helped to illustrate the

construct of decision making processes. Both freedom of choice to participate in activities and freedom of choice of people you want to participate with and feeling not skilled enough to participate illustrate how one makes a choice based on certain circumstances in their life.

Elizabeth noted although she enjoys participating in activities at the LORC sometimes the party atmosphere bothered her. Sometimes she chose not to engage with people or in activities due to alcohol, “there is an awful lot of alcohol here and an awful lot of drinking... they do some really stupid things when they get tipsy.”

Part of the novelty of this LORC is that there is an abundance of social, physical, and leisure activities and groups to choose from. However, with the abundance of activities and groups some of the participants felt they were not good enough to participate in some activities. This theme relates to the other themes because one may make the choice to not participate in an activity because one feels one will be embarrassed or hinder another’s participation in that activity. This theme became known as feeling not skilled enough to participate. Respondents often cited not wanting to embarrass oneself or hinder the activity for other people. The theme was made up of categories such as: comparisons between here and previous home, negative aspects of the LORC’s social life, and negative aspects of physical activity in the LORC. This theme was especially relevant for most participants when discussing their physical activities. Respondents mentioned feeling that although they may have had an interest in a particular activity they often found that after trying it they were not good enough to participate. A few of the participants spoke about having an interest in golf, but seeing how quickly other people played or how well they played made them nervous about participating, so they chose not to participate. These sentiments were echoed by other respondents when discussing water aerobics, tennis, and pickleball.

Alice a retired schoolteacher stated that although she could play pickleball in her backyard with her husband. She did not think she could keep up with the people playing on the neighborhood courts, “then other normal people came and forget it... I could play

it with him in our backyard, and he could hit it to me. But not the way they play, two hours at one o'clock in the afternoon is insanity.”

Participants often cited the ability to choose from an array of social, physical, and leisure activities as one of the main draws to the LORC.

Rachel a former bookkeeper from the upper Midwest reported before moving to the LORC she lived in a nearby town. Her husband and her had decided to move to the LORC because of the amount of activities and the ability to be able to choose what they wanted to do for social, physical, and leisure activities.

Other respondents mentioned the freedom one has in choosing a social group or social contacts. This freedom gave them the ability to form friendships and social connections with a wide variety of other people living in the LORC.

Cathy stated one of the nicest parts about living in this LORC was when she found a group of individuals that she did not “gel with” with respect to cards or social activities. She was able to make a decision to find another group that had the same interests but was composed of different people. Cathy explained that this made it easier to achieve her goals of staying active because there was such a variety and abundance of people.

Respondents reported the ability to choose their activities and who they participated with helped to make them more satisfied with their lives. Most of the respondents felt that the variety of activities and the ability to choose from these activities led to a higher satisfaction with life. Several respondents even cited this as the reason they had moved to this LORC. Most respondents felt that their ability to be able to choose who and what they wanted to participate in helped them to lead a more satisfying life because they were able to make the decisions, which shaped their idea of aging.

Adaptive Capacity

Adaptive capacity postulates humans are sensitive to their strengths and weaknesses, and hence, humans often make the decision to participate in activities where they perceive themselves to be stronger (Atchley, 1994; 1998). These findings were also relevant in social relationships; suggesting, as people age they engage in relationships that have a positive

association for them (Cornwell, et al., 2008; Cornwell, 2009). Themes that illustrated adaptive capacity were: the importance of neighbors/ structure of the neighborhood, convenience of facilities, convenience of activities, became more involved with one activity, and the subsequent maintenance or increase in life satisfaction. These themes combine to represent the construct of adaptive capacity. Together these themes suggest one focuses on relationships that are convenient and beneficial to oneself and activities that one is strong in, enjoys doing, and finds convenient to do.

Many of the participants who were interviewed stated their neighbors had become like family for them. The respondents stated a lot of their social, physical, and leisure activities involved their neighbors. These social contacts were so important to the respondents because they provided a convenient and positive group of people to socialize with; who had gone through many of the same experiences they had. The respondents noted their neighbors had often moved to the LORC at the same time they did. These experiences to many of the respondents were part of the reason they placed such a high emphasis on these relationships.

Irene noted her neighbors were like family to her, and even before her neighbors had moved in she was thinking about what they would be like. When she finally met her neighbors she could not be more thrilled. She stated, "Yeah, our neighbors have become our extended family. It is amazing how close you get to people when you are 1200 miles away from the rest of your family. And a lot of people here are in the same boat. You know they are hundreds of miles away from their families so we have become one and another's family and it is a good feeling."

Respondents described facilities at the LORC as very convenient, abundant, and easily accessible. These responses formed the basis for the theme convenience of facilities. By creating facilities that were convenient, abundant, and easily accessible the LORC developers made it easy for older adults to adapt to their environment as they aged. The amenities the LORC provided and facilitated for residents helped to increase the respondents' abilities to adapt to their

environment. Respondents cited numerous community facilities which increased the convenience of the community. Some respondents felt the golf cart paths made the community very convenient. There were numerous reasons given for the convenience of the golf cart paths including: cost, ease of use, and the ability to drive a golf cart even after losing one's drivers license. Many of the respondents felt this amenity along with the relative proximity of hospitals, pharmacies, and grocery stores gave them the ability to remain independent longer as they aged. Many of the respondents also cited the entertainment and dining options as a reason the LORC was so convenient. Many respondents felt their entertainment and dining options were as good or better than the ones they left behind in their previous home.

Opal stated that the shows, musical performances, and restaurants in this LORC provided as good of entertainment and dining experience as the major northeastern city she lived in before moving to the LORC. She listed these amenities as her favorite aspects of the LORC.

Many of the respondents cited the convenience of activities as one of the primary contributors to their life satisfaction. Respondents stated the LORC tried to make activities fun and accessible keeping in mind the participants in the activities were older. The respondents found the activities easy and accessible to do, and therefore had a sense of perceived strength in the activity. Many of the respondents felt the LORC paid attention to their needs by tailoring physical activities to fit older adults' abilities.

Alice a former teacher from the Northeast noted, "they are excellent teachers and the people really love doing it. Because you can do it a few times. It is not like you have to be perfect. Also they know that we are older. So it is not like they think that we are perfect, so you can do it this way or that way and they will help you adjust."

Most of the respondents interviewed noted that their schedules were quite full with social, physical, and leisure activities. They noted the convenience of the activities made them try things they had never tried before.

Elizabeth noted since moving to the LORC she had tried so many new activities. She stated, “I had never heard of Bunco. I had never heard of Hand and Foot or Mexico Train Dominoes or games that they play. I had never heard of these things, but I am having a ball playing Mexican Train.”

Most of the respondents noted the convenience of the activities helped contribute to their satisfaction with life and the LORC.

Many of the participants noted as the amount of time they lived in the LORC increased they slowly paired down the amount of activities they participated in. This suggests as one ages they select activities they excel in. Many of the respondents stated when they first moved to the LORC they participated in a lot more social, physical, and leisure activities.

Cathy remembered when she first moved to the LORC her realtor recommended to not do too many activities when she first moved in because she would become burned out with the amount of activities.

Many of the respondents noted they had started off with more activities and now only participated in a few. Some respondents even mentioned they were not so busy as to have to take a break from their busy schedules.

Person-Environment Fit

Person-environment fit model is composed of four constructs (see Figure 4-4) and results in the outcome variables of psychological well-being and residential satisfaction (Kahana et al., 2003). Multiple themes emerged from the codes and categories to explain how continuity theory worked in the context of the LORC. However, the themes could also be explained by person-environment model which provides an understanding of how the “fit” between the person (activity preferences) and environment (LORC) can lead to increased life satisfaction. For example, age, race, and social contact can be seen as interrelated personal characteristics (see Table 4-4). Age was often cited by participants as one of the reasons why there was such an availability of social contacts. Likewise, all of the respondents identified themselves as White,

further confirming prior research which suggested LORCs were predominantly White homogenous societies (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). One respondent noted that because everyone was retired it just made it easier to find people who were “into the same things you were into.” These findings further confirm earlier findings about age and the role it plays in how older adults view friendships in an LORC (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005).

Convenience of facilities, convenience of activities, neighbors/ structure of the neighborhood, and social contacts all illustrate the construct of environmental characteristics. Participants routinely acknowledged that the LORC by organizing social, physical, and leisure activities for residents helped to provide them with a broadened social network and a venue to facilitate these activities. Many of the participants often cited this as one of the main reasons they were so satisfied with living in this LORC.

When respondents described their neighborhood they described a neighborhood that let them take advantage of their strengths in a way that suited their needs. Many of the respondents noted their neighborhood offered many social, physical, and leisure activities. Respondents described themed neighborhood parties and outings to local attractions with their neighborhood groups.

Dorothy a retiree from Florida found her neighborhood social activities to be a huge contributor in her satisfaction with her neighborhood. She described neighborhood block parties which featured a theme such as Mardi Gras or Halloween, dancing, and a DJ.

Another aspect of the neighborhood that represented adaptive capacity is the structure of the neighborhood theme. Respondents stated the neighborhood centers which featured neighborhood mailboxes and neighborhood pools really helped to increase their social activity and hence increase their life satisfaction.

Opal a retired professional from the Northeast said that when she first moved to the LORC she did not like having to get her mail at the neighborhood mailboxes, but then

she noticed that because everyone has to go get the mail. The mailboxes had become a meeting place.

Participants also noted the community influenced their current actions in their participation in activities. The respondents stated part of why they had moved to the LORC was the amount and variety of activities. Respondents overwhelmingly described themselves as busy people in their past lives, and so naturally to these respondents this LORC offered them the chance to remain busy.

Karen is a semi-retired professional living in the LORC. She described the LORC as the perfect mix of activities. She stated before moving to this LORC she was very busy with social, physical, and leisure activities. Since moving to this LORC she has noticed that although she does not participate in exactly the same activities she still spends as much time doing them.

Many of the respondents felt the community and its facilities and activities fit what they desired for activities in retirement.

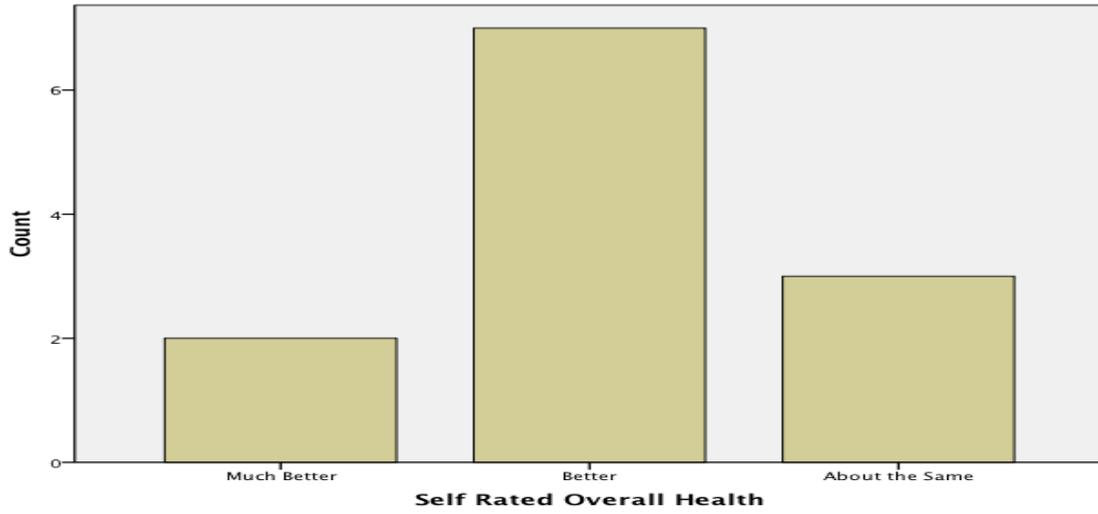


Figure 4-1. Graph of Self Rated Overall Health

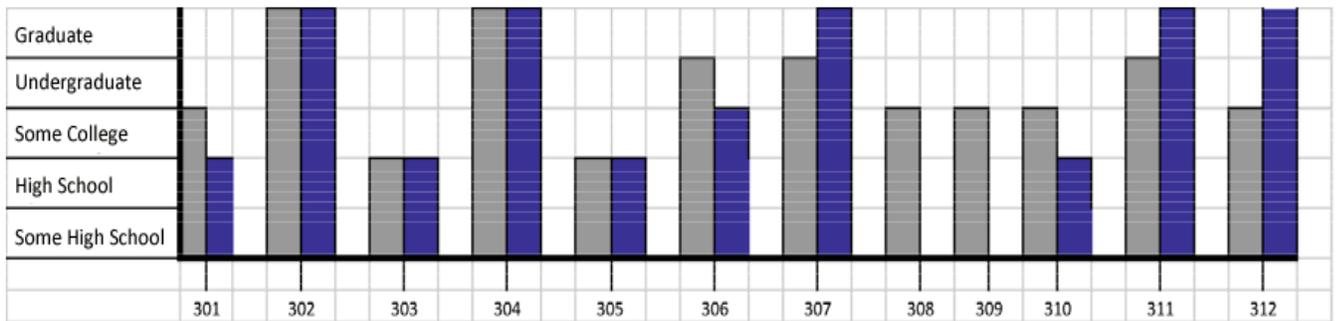


Figure 4-2. Graph of Level of Education and Partners Level of Education

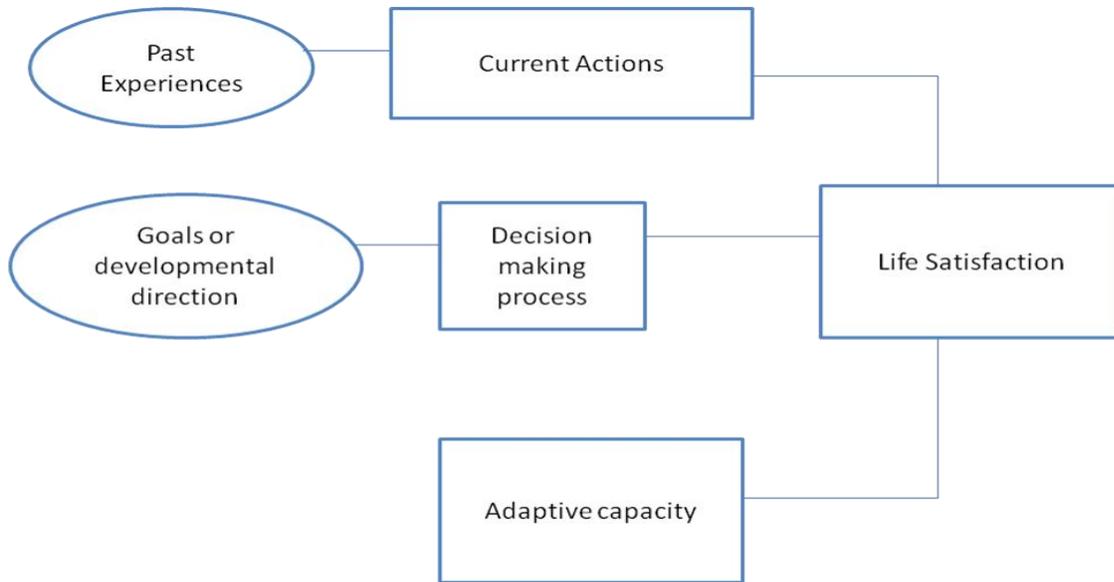


Figure 4-3. Diagram of Continuity Theory

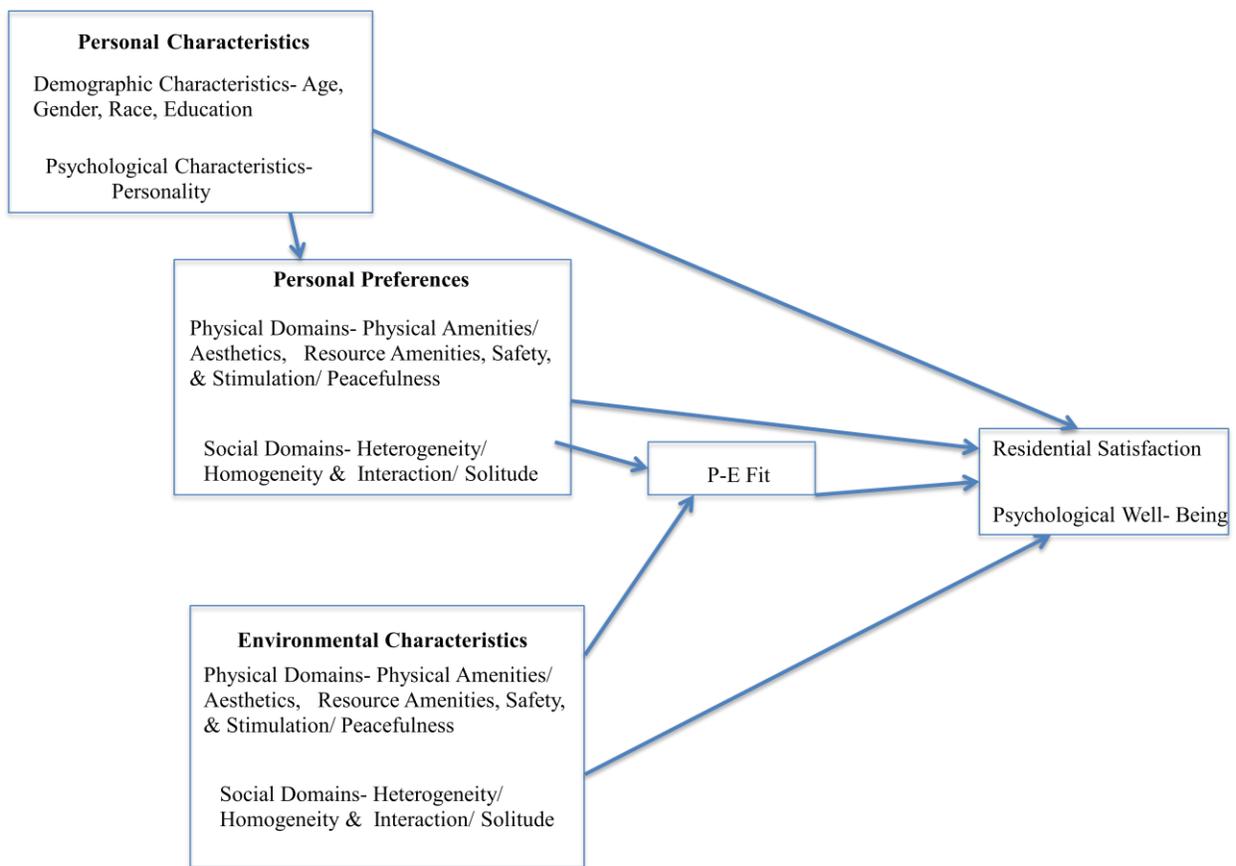


Figure 4-4. Diagram of Person- Environment Fit Model

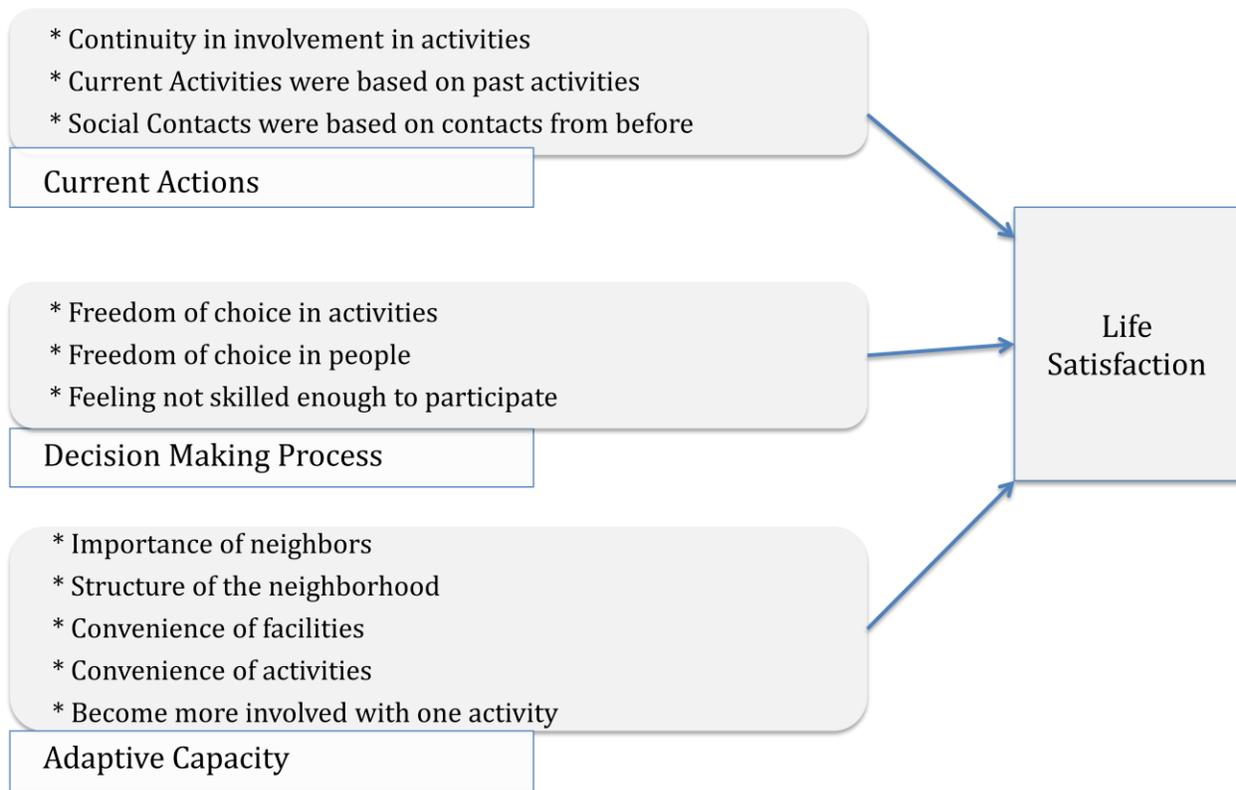


Figure 4-5. Diagram of Continuity Theory with Themes

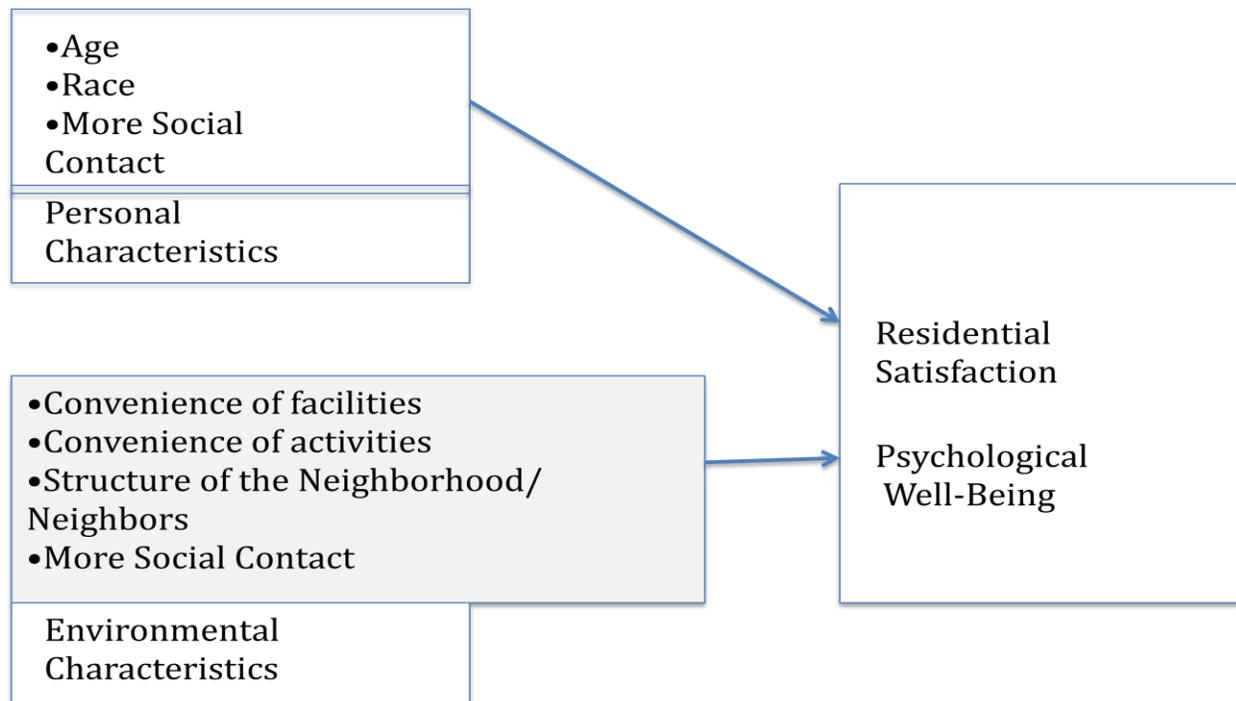


Figure 4-6. Diagram of Person-Environment Fit Model with Themes

Table 4-1. Table illustrating last place of residence before the LORC

State	Number
Florida	3
Indiana	1
Michigan	3
New Jersey	1
New York	1
Ohio	1
Pennsylvania	2

Table 4-2. Table illustrating how themes combine to reflect constructs influencing life satisfaction

Current Actions	Decision Making Process	Adaptive Capacity
Continuity in involvement in social, physical, and leisure activities	Freedom of choice and people you want to participate with	The importance of neighbors/ structure of the neighborhood
More social contacts	Feeling not skilled enough to participate	Convenience of facilities
		Convenience of activities
		Became more involved with one activity

Table 4-3. Table illustrating how themes and characteristics combine to reflect constructs of Person-Environment Fit Model

Personal Characteristics	Environmental Characteristics
Age	Convenience of facilities
Race	Convenience of activities
More Social Contact	Structure of the Neighborhood/ Neighbors
	More Social Contact

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSIONS

The female sample interviewed for this study discussed their various social, physical, and leisure activities and how they influenced their life satisfaction. The respondents' answers to the interview questions were examined using manifest content analysis. Several themes emerged from manifest content analysis that illustrated how the LORC's supported activities impacted one's life satisfaction. These themes were then examined and two theories emerged, continuity theory and person-environment fit model. These theories were utilized to explain how one's activities in an LORC influence life satisfaction.

The study sought to define respondents' activities before and since moving to the LORC, how these activities influenced life satisfaction, and how life satisfaction has changed since moving to the LORC. Many of the findings of this study are in concurrence with previous findings on activities, life satisfaction, and leisure oriented retirement communities (Atchley, 1982; Lawton, 1998; McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005; Cvitkovich & Wister, 2001; Kahana, 1982; Lewin, 1951; Carp & Carp, 1984; Baars & Thomése, 1994; Thomése & Broese, 2006; Ekerdt, 1986; Bosse & Ekerdt, 1981). The respondents in this study indicated that they found the planned, sponsored, and supported activities in the LORC to increase their life satisfaction. This discussion will outline the key findings and how they build on previous findings in the aforementioned fields. The discussion will focus on the respondents' continuation of activities, social contacts, convenience provided by the variety of options, views on the leisure oriented retirement community, and life satisfaction. The discussion will also seek to answer the questions posed at the beginning of the research: (1) Before moving to the LORC how did social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction? (2) How do LORC

supported social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to women's life satisfaction? (3) How has life satisfaction changed since moving to the LORC?

Demographics

The demographic questionnaire and satisfaction with life scale suggest a few characteristics of the respondents of this study. Some of the characteristics of this sample are consistent with earlier work done on LORCs. This sample was entirely White. This is consistent with past research on LORCs, which suggest LORCs are predominantly racially homogenous groups (McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). This finding also helped in shaping the characteristics and themes, which seem to be explained by environmental characteristics. The respondents also had high self perceived health. This finding was consistent with past research indicating older females have a high self perceived health (Ferraro, 1980; Larue et al., 1979). The demographic questionnaire further suggests most of the women relocated to the LORC from the Northeast, Midwest, and South. This finding is also consistent with past research on LORCs in Florida and Arizona (He & Schachter, 2003; McHugh & Larson-Keagy, 2005). The SWLS indicated the women in this sample of this LORC had a very high satisfaction with life. These respondents can be characterized as predominantly White with a high self perceived health and satisfaction with life score. The significance of the demographic and SWLS results is that it further suggests that the conclusions reached below are very limited due to the sample size. This limitation and its implications are discussed further in the limitations section.

Research Questions

Before Moving to this LORC How Did Social, Physical, and Leisure Activities Contribute to Women's Life Satisfaction?

The findings suggest residents replace old activities with new activities or similar activities as they age and this in turn helps to influence a maintained or increased life satisfaction.

Understanding these activities through continuity theory, “current actions” are shaped by an individual’s past activities which in turn influences their future life satisfaction (Atchley, 1994). Respondents indicated that before moving to the LORC most of them were very busy with social activities. Several respondents identified their job as their primary social activity. Many of the respondents were satisfied with their previous activities or jobs; however, they also noted their new role in the LORC was much more fulfilling. This finding is in accordance with past research suggesting as older adults age they replace old roles with new roles in society (Havighurst, 1963; Atchley, 1994). One respondent stated before moving to the LORC her social activities revolved around her work and co-workers. Another suggested that although she went out to occasional dinners and movies with friends, her work was her social life before moving to the LORC, and it consumed her. Both of these respondents reported being very involved in their social activities before moving to the LORC. They stated that although they were not involved in working anymore they were still very involved in their social activities. This role replacement is based on an individual’s past experiences. Previous findings suggest one’s current actions are shaped by their past experiences (Atchley 1982; 1983; 1989; 1994).

Physical activities before moving to the LORC were not a central part of the respondent’s life satisfaction. Half of the respondents reported that before moving to the LORC they were involved in some physical activities; most of these respondents indicated these physical activities influenced their life satisfaction before moving to the LORC. Other respondents indicated that although they were not involved in any formal physical activity. They considered their past activities or job to be a central part of their physical activity. Ten of the respondents reported after moving to the LORC they were more involved in physical activities. Most of the

respondents indicated before moving to the LORC they had little to no participation in leisure activities due to time constraints.

These findings support previous research which suggest as older adults age they replace previous activities with current activities in order to maintain or increase their life satisfaction (Atchley, 1983;1989). Continuity theory holds older adults are undergoing changes and adapting to new situations drawing on past experiences that shape their current actions, much like the respondents in the LORC (Atchley 1983; 1989). These findings were furthered by later research suggesting that one's amount of participation in an activity in the early part of one's life is a strong predictor for activity in the later part of one's life (Agahi et al., 2006). Later research suggested as individuals age their personal characteristics influence their behavior (Nimrod, 2008a; Nimrod & Adoni, 2006). Many of the participants reported that they were "doers" and their behavior had remained consistent from pre to post retirement. The responses of some of the respondents are in congruence with findings about continuity theory and innovation theory that suggest past experiences impact current actions.

How Do the LORC's Facilitated Social, Physical, and Leisure Activities Contribute to Women's Life Satisfaction?

The respondents' social, physical, and leisure activities within the context of the LORC could be explained by all three constructs of continuity theory that were used to understand the themes identified in the interviews. As already noted, respondents' current actions were heavily influenced by their past actions, and these current actions influenced respondents' current life satisfaction. Also, respondents indicated that before moving to the LORC they had developed goals or a developmental direction, which influenced their decision making process and in turn led to a maintained or increased life satisfaction. Respondents further suggested they focused on

activities and relationships they were stronger at and had more strength in, which is reflective of the third construct of continuity theory, adaptive capacity.

These constructs were expressed in the interviews when respondents indicated that although they were busy in a different way than they were before moving to the LORC, they were still occupied with activities. The activities of the respondents usually were some type of social or leisure activity. Some of the respondents had taken a more active role in a club or activity since moving to the LORC. Many of the respondents reported spending more time gardening, reading, being active in clubs, and exercising.

The majority of the women interviewed described an active and involved social life. These findings are in agreement with previous research which found social participation and social homogeneity are extremely important to an older adults satisfaction as they age (Kahana, Lovegreen, Kahana & Kahana, 2003). The self- reported high level of life satisfaction the women reported, was influenced by activities and organizations (be it social, physical, or leisure activities). These findings are in consensus with earlier research by Thomése and Broese who found that an older adult's life satisfaction is heavily influenced by their social environment. The respondents also reported one of the primary reasons they moved to the LORC was that they were able to have a social life separate from their children. These findings were later confirmed by Baars and Thomése (1994) who suggested older adults seek independence in selecting their housing options.

One respondent said although she does not work anymore she now takes classes and volunteers with the same intensity that she did before moving to the LORC (while she was working). Although, these women had a change in their activity, they still maintained the same level and pattern of involvement in a new activity. Many of the respondents stated that although

they had formed new friendships they continued to do many of the same social activities they had always participated in such as cards, dinners, plays and movies. This also coincides with adaptive capacity, a principal tenant of continuity theory. A limitation of the current study's results in applying these findings to previous research on adaptive capacity is that the respondents were female, but the female respondents in this research seem to confirm the previous findings (Genoe & Singleton, 2006). Genoe and Singleton (2006), found that as older males age although they may give up some activities they simply replace these activities with activities they already are involved in (they just allocate more time to this activity).

Although, many of the respondents reported initially maintaining the same level of activity when moving to the LORC, they also indicated that the level of commitment or time spent doing certain activities had decreased some since moving to the LORC. Respondents reported although they initially were very involved in a physical activity; they had found that the physical activity was not for them and they no longer participated in that physical activity. However, these respondents still reported high levels of satisfaction with their physical activities. These findings are in line with later work done on activity and the decision making process (Kelly, 1993; Atchley, 1982; 1983; 1989; 1994). The decision making process is influenced by goals and developmental direction. The findings above suggest some respondents felt certain activities did not fit their developmental direction and therefore decided not to participate in them.

The facilities and amenities made the community a better fit for the respondents' physical abilities. Many of the respondents mentioned that although they had never golfed, played card games, played tennis, line danced, or participated in watching polo they were able to do this in the LORC. Respondents mentioned there were beginning classes for leisure activities such as language classes. They emphasized the instructors made every effort to accommodate

participants. The respondents talked about personal experiences where an instructor had taken extra time to teach them or someone they knew how to kayak or line dance. The majority of respondents indicated this was part of what made the social, physical, and leisure activities so enjoyable. Others mentioned the surroundings were ideal for participating in social, physical, and leisure activities. One respondent discussed how the location of the mailboxes in a central location enabled her to meet people who she now engages in activities with. Another respondent stated the town squares really provided the perfect opportunity to meet people. Some respondents indicated although they usually would go to the town square to watch line dancing; they always would end up meeting new people. Other respondents mentioned that the bike and running paths and free golf made it extremely easy to participate in physical activities. They noted that the physical fitness classes were designed with older adults in mind. Respondents also noted the closeness of neighborhood pools contributed to their participation in physical activities. Other respondents reported that the restaurants and entertainment provided or facilitated by the LORC made it possible to enjoy activities in a way that is unlike other retirement communities. Many of the respondents stated that they chose to move to the LORC because of the amenities and ability to engage in social, physical, and leisure activities.

Another aspect of the activities that contributed to the respondents' life satisfaction was the facilities. Researchers in the past have attempted to explain a person's behavior by how well they fit their environment (Lawton & Nahemow, 1973; Kahana, 1982; Carp & Carp, 1984). In early work on person-environment fit model, Lewin (1951) theorized an individual's behavior is a result of their personal experiences and physical environment. Later research attempted to explain how environments influence aging (Lawton & Nahemow, 1973; Kahana, 1982; Carp & Carp, 1984). Respondents stated part of the reason they enjoyed living in the LORC was the

amenities and facilities within the LORC. One respondent noted the bike and running trails make it much easier to get out an exercise. Still others noted that the many available classes and social organizations kept them active and involved. Most of the respondents credited the LORC with providing the activities and social opportunities for residents. One of the respondents stated when she first moved to the LORC the activities director would contact her to participate in activities and organizations. She stated knowing she was involved and in a community that met her needs really contributed to her satisfaction with life. These findings are in concurrence with earlier work on living arrangements of older adults (Kahana,1982; Carp & Carp,1984).

Many of the respondents noted the LORC offered ideal surroundings for aging. These findings add to previous work done on person- environment fit model. All of the respondents noted some feature or amenity of the LORC made living there convenient. Past research on person-environment fit model has indicated older adults enjoy a higher level of satisfaction when in an environment where their needs are met (Kahana et al., 2003; Cvitkovich & Wister, 2001). Many of the respondents talked about how they viewed the LORC as somewhere they could age in place. Some respondents talked about the convenience of travel by golf cart throughout the community. One respondent noted that it was convenient because you had the ability to get to grocery stores, restaurants, pharmacies, doctors, hospitals, and entertainment facilities. Another respondent noted that this was convenient because you did not need a driver's license to drive a golf cart. The amenity of travel by golf cart created a sense of convenience for the respondents.

The respondents also noted it was very easy to become part of a social network and this influenced their life satisfaction. Respondents noted that upon moving to the LORC they joined social organizations, met neighbors, and took classes. They felt the social connections they made in many ways were stronger than their social connections before moving to the LORC. The

respondents talked about how their new social activities involved others who were like them. The interactions that people had were of their choosing, and if they did not like one group of people there were several other groups that would have more similar interests. Although all of the respondents emphasized they were individuals; they all seemed to place a high level of value on the social connections they made in the LORC. Some of the respondents compared their neighbors to family members. Overall, the respondents felt the social connections they made through social activities greatly influenced their life satisfaction. The respondents also suggest their community increases their life satisfaction. Two of the respondents mentioned the foresight and ingenuity the developers of the LORC had in creating a place where there were limitless activities and opportunities. These responses are parallel to findings in previous studies about leisure oriented retirement communities (Youngblood, 2005; McHugh & Larson- Keagy, 2005).

Most respondents reported they were less involved and had less contact with children and grandchildren. However, in congruence with previous findings the respondents tended to stay engaged with a large amount of individuals inside the LORC and in some cases engaged in more communication with more individuals than they did before moving to the LORC (Atchley, 1994). Reasons given for the continuation or increase in communication with others inside the LORC included: more free time, more like minded individuals, and the convenience of meeting with other older adults. Although this study focused more on the role of activity in life satisfaction respondents reported that the new friendships they had formed with neighbors and fellow club members felt like a family. These findings further support work suggesting that as older adults retire they often form new meaningful friendships and relationships (Connidis, 2001; de Jong Gierveld, 2004).

How Has Life Satisfaction Changed Since Moving to this LORC?

When respondents were asked if they felt the LORC supported activities increased their life satisfaction, the overwhelming reaction was that although they were satisfied with life before moving to the LORC they were more satisfied with life at the LORC because of all the activities. These findings are consistent with continuity theory and person-environment fit model which suggests as individuals age if they continue in the same or similar activities in an environment which provides a good fit this will lead to a maintained or increased life satisfaction. These findings are in agreement with previous findings suggesting there is a causal relationship between an increase in activities and an increase in life satisfaction (Havighurst, et al., 1968; Atchley, 1983; 1989; 1994). The respondents' satisfaction with life scale was in agreement with these results.

All of the respondents reported although they were satisfied in their previous locations; they were much more satisfied with life since moving to the LORC. One respondent reported she did not know she could be so satisfied with life before moving to the LORC. Another stated that although a lot of the same activities could be done elsewhere the LORC's organization of those activities really helped improve how satisfied she was with life. Another respondent talked about retiring to the nearby city of Ocala before moving to the LORC. She mentioned although she was satisfied living in Ocala; when they moved to the LORC she realized there was so many more activities she could participate in and although she was busier – she was more satisfied. Some respondents noted that there were so many facilities and activities to choose from that it made it hard not to participate and gain satisfaction from at least one form of activity. Others reported that even before moving to the LORC they were very satisfied with life but have remained satisfied with life since moving to the LORC. All of the respondents reported that in some way the activities in the LORC had influenced their life satisfaction in a positive way.

Limitations & Strengths of the Study

Replication of this study should allow for a few considerations. Firstly, these responses and findings are strictly limited to this group of females living in this LORC. One of the central limitations of this research is the sample. A sample size of twelve although appropriate for qualitative research, does not provide very much explanatory power outside of the sample. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized to other women in the LORC or other women living in an LORC outside of this LORC. It is important to note this sample and therefore the findings and conclusions of this study, which, incorporated continuity theory as a possible explanation to activities influence on life satisfaction in an LORC, may not be applicable to older adults who are disabled (Minkler, 1990).

Secondly, this group of female respondents had a very high life satisfaction score; it should be noted there was an attempt to find people who were also unsatisfied with life at the LORC. However, this process was unsuccessful; many of the respondents suggested those who were not happy with the LORC simply moved very quickly after initially relocating to the LORC. A third, consideration which should be taken into account in future replications of this study is the female participant's high self rated health. These findings may be linked to the sample's socio-economic status. The findings and results found above were on females who rated their physical health and life satisfaction high in comparison to previous studies. These findings also suggest another possible limitation, cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance is holding two conflicting ideas at once (Festinger, 1957). For example, a respondent may have said they were satisfied with their activities and life in the LORC. However, in actuality they were not satisfied with their activities or life in the LORC, but felt the need to report as such because of the amount of time or money they spent moving to the LORC. A possible way to

control for this limitation in future replications of this study would be to use an instrument that measures social desirability

Another consideration researchers should keep in mind is the three types of activities were introduced to the participants with a definitional framework, for example, “Physical activities have been defined by previous research as any body movement that requires energy. How does your definition of physical activities differ?” This definitional framework could be perceived as introducing a bias into participants’ responses about their social, physical, and leisure activities. However, the definitions were included because during the pilot testing phase participants felt they needed a stronger base for understanding the questions. Another bias introduced by the interview questions is the basis the questions had in activity and continuity theory. It is possible with the basis some of the questions had in continuity theory the responses in some way were influenced by continuity theory. However, both independent reviewers were not familiar with continuity theory and found similar categories and themes as me. Also the responses indicated person-environment fit model explained some of the occurring phenomenon in the data.

Another consideration of these findings is the limitation of a cross-sectional study. The cross-sectional study requires participants to remember past events in their lives. Past research suggests reminiscence often leads to changes in how one views their past life experiences (Bluck & Levine, 1998). Hence, a future study might use a longitudinal approach to observe the relationship between activities and life satisfaction. This would help to eliminate the limitation of reminiscence.

An additional limitation of the sample is the confounding possibility the sample was more satisfied because of their shift from work to retirement. However, the sample consisted of a

variety of women with various work experiences. Some of the sample worked outside of the home fulltime, some of the sample worked outside of the home part-time, some of the sample worked outside of the home before having children, while, others had never worked outside of the home. The variety of women within the sample helped to lessen the effect of this confounding variable.

One of the main goals of this study was to determine how LORC sponsored activities influence life satisfaction. This question provided a unique basis because it has never been asked before. Previous research on LORCs has focused on demographic information (He & Schachter, 2003), locations and physical aspects of LORCs (Streib, Flots, & Peacock, 2007), themes among residents in LORCs (McHugh & Larson- Keagy, 2005), and significant life events in LORCs (Youngblood, 2004). This study focused on two of the main advertised attributes of a LORC, activities and life satisfaction. The findings utilized continuity theory and person-environment fit model to explain the relationship between activities and life satisfaction in an LORC. A more in depth look at these theories within the context of an LORC may help to further explain the intrigue and popularity of these communities for older adults.

Recommendations

As the baby boomer generation moves towards retirement, and LORCs presumably grow in popularity their impact on activities and life satisfaction is a key inquiry among many lay people and practitioners. This research focused on finding out how social, physical, and leisure activities influenced life satisfaction before and since moving to the LORC. Although, the results and findings presented above only represent the sample; they do provide a direction for future research to gain a deeper understanding of the topics discussed above. The findings and application of these findings also offer a deeper understanding of continuity theory by applying two constructs from person-environment fit model to explain how older adults are able to

continue activity and derive life satisfaction in the context of an LORC. These findings offer the first foray into the topic of how LORC sponsored or facilitated activities influence the life satisfaction of older adults.

The findings suggest, with very minimal exception, the females in this study attributed their maintenance or increase in life satisfaction since moving to the LORC to their maintenance or increase in the LORC sponsored or facilitated social, physical, and leisure activities. Suggesting older females who are looking at the possibility of relocating to an LORC can infer that community sponsored or facilitated activities can play a large role in their future life satisfaction. Hence, when an older female adult is examining LORCs as a retirement option with an end goal of maintenance or increased life satisfaction in mind; the older female should inquire about the LORC's sponsored or facilitated activities.

LORC developers can imply from these findings that within the context of an LORC residents appreciate the LORC's sponsored or facilitated activities. LORC architects, developers, and marketers can infer from these findings their community sponsored or facilitated activities help to make their community more attractive to part of their target audience, older females.

However, a few suggestions for improvement of a LORC can be inferred from this data. Older females in this study felt there was different skill sets among the residents of the LORC, but sometimes little recognition of the different skill sets by the other residents of the LORC. Many women in the sample chose not to participate in golf or pickleball because of their perceived lack of skill in that activity. A possible recommendation for LORC developers is to have different skill levels in activities and at certain facilities around the LORC (such as beginner golf courses). Another inference that LORC developers can make from this data is the residents in this sample place a high portion of their life satisfaction as it relates to activities on

the convenience of activities. Many of the women interviewed in this sample placed a high value on their neighborhood's organized social activities. However, some of the sample lamented about the fact that their street did not plan or organize social activities. A possible recommendation to LORC developers is to provide each community with an activity planner in charge of planning social activities for each street or section of the LORC.

The research also has two significant implications for gerontologists. The first implication is the impact of LORC's sponsored or facilitated activities on an older female's life satisfaction. This implies older females particularly enjoy pre-existing activities and social groups. This sample was characterized by unusually high life satisfaction for this age group (Diener et al., 1985; McAuley et al., 2006). Further suggesting the LORC's sponsored or facilitated activities may have played a role in this. Secondly, from a theoretical perspective these findings imply that there is significance in the personal characteristics and environmental characteristics of individuals that influence life satisfaction. Further, development of these constructs as it relates to successful aging and/ or life satisfaction may help to provide researchers with a better understanding of activities and life satisfaction in the context of an LORC.

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEWER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Follow these instructions and this script when interviewing participants for the research:

Prior to In-Depth Semistructured Interview:

- **48-24 hours in advance of the In-Depth Semistructured interview:** Call Participants to remind them of their scheduled interview
 - Remind them of time, date, and location
 - Thank them again in advance for their participation
- **24 hours in advance call library to confirm room**
- Make sure there is room left on the MP3 digital recording device, and that the participant's recording number corresponds with their participant number
- Make sure that their participant packet is in order
 - **Two** copies of informed consent
 - Background questionnaire
 - Thank you note for participation
 - Compensation
- Make sure that study materials are ready for the in-depth semistructured interview
 - Pens
 - Batteries are new in MP3 digital recording device
- Greet participants at entrance to library and walk them to private conference room
- Make sure door is closed and that the participant is comfortable

During the In-Depth Semistructured interview:

- Check name on participant log and guide them to their chair
- Remind them that the interview will take roughly an hour and to please silence their phones for the duration of the interview
- Make sure that informed consents and background questionnaires are filled out and completed
- Check to make sure participant numbers on the top of the informed consent and background questionnaire match
- Inform the participant when an hour has passed and try to wrap up the interview
 - Set a cell phone alarm to buzz for when an hour has passed
- Set the MP3 recording device in the middle of the table and remind the participant that they are being recorded

After the In-Depth Semistructured interview:

- Thank the participant for participating
- Ensure that the participant has their copy of the informed consent
- Hand the participant the thank you note and compensation
- Walk them to their car and thank them again for coming

APPENDIX B
WELCOME, INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
PROTOCOL, AND INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

Hello, thank you for coming to this interview today. My name is Erin Smith, and I will be conducting this interview as part of my research on successful aging in Leisure Oriented Retirement Communities like [REDACTED].

Again today you will be participating in an interview about activities in communities like [REDACTED]. The whole study may take up to 90 minutes, but you will be compensated for your time.

Please note that I may look at a script from time to time to ensure that everyone receives the same set of questions. Also note that there is a small MP3 recording device in the center of the table because it is impossible to take complete notes while asking the questions.

Informed Consent

The first two papers I will hand you are the informed consent forms. The consent form lets you know about the precautions, benefits, risks, confidentiality, and compensation that are involved with this study. All information provided on the questionnaires and during the interview will be kept confidential. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your response to any question is completely voluntary as well – that is you are free not to answer any question. There are two copies of the informed consent. One is to be signed and returned to me, the other is for you to take home.

Please read over your informed consent. If you feel comfortable with participating in the study, please fill out and sign your informed consent. Print your name and date on the first line of the second page, and sign and date the second line where it says participant. Please be sure to read, fill out, and sign both copies of the informed consent.

Background Questionnaire

The first questionnaire I will hand you asks for background information. Please take a minute to look over these questions and ask for clarification if needed.

Give the participant time to fill out the Background Questionnaire.

Clarification on race if asked for:

- "White. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as 'White' or report entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Near Easterner, Arab, or Polish."
- "Black or African American. A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as 'Black, African Am., or Negro', or provide written entries such as African American, Afro American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian."
- 'Hispanic or Latino', "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race."
- "Asian. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. It includes 'Asian Indian', 'Chinese', 'Filipino', 'Korean', 'Japanese', 'Vietnamese', and 'Other Asian'."
- "Some other race. Includes all other responses not included in the 'White', 'Black or African American', 'Hispanic/Latino', and 'Asian' race categories described above.

SWLS

The next part of the questionnaire is the satisfaction with life scale. I will read the instructions aloud, and if you have any questions please let me know. Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 7- point scale below, choose a number that represents your agreement or disagreement with each statement. Place that number to the left of the statement. Please be honest in your responses.

- 7 - Strongly Agree
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly Agree
- 4 - Neither Agree or Disagree
- 3 - Slightly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly Disagree

After you are done please let me know.

APPENDIX C
SCRIPT FOR IN-DEPTH SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEW

In-Depth Semistructured Interview

We are now ready to begin the interview portion of this study. As a reminder you do not have to answer a question if you do not feel comfortable. I will be recording this interview, but as a reminder your responses will remain confidential. I will be keeping track of time to make sure that the interview is on schedule. If any question is unclear please let me know, and I will try to clarify the question for you. Please try to provide a detailed response to every question. Now we are ready to begin, before we begin do you have any questions?

Start recording.

This is participant number _____'s in-depth interview.

1)

Previous research has defined social activities as a set of interactions and relationships between people. How does your definition of social activities differ?

What are some of these activities?

What are some of your social activities?

How do you think social activities relate to physical and leisure activities?

How would you describe your participation in social activities before you moved to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

How often did you engage in these activities?

If they answered did not participate

Why did you not participate?

How did social activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED]?

How would you describe your participation in social activities at [REDACTED]?

How often do you engage in these activities?

If they answered do not participate

Why do you not participate?

How do [REDACTED] supported social activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

2)

Physical activities have been defined by previous research as any body movement that requires energy. How does your definition of physical activities differ?

What are some of these activities?

What are some of your physical activities?

How do you think physical activities relate to social and leisure activities?

How would you describe your participation in physical activities before you moved to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

How often did you engage in these activities?

If they answered did not participate

Why did you not participate?

How did physical activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED]?

How would you describe your participation in physical activities at [REDACTED]?

How often do you engage in these activities?

If they answered do not participate

Why do you not participate?

How do [REDACTED] supported physical activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

3)

Leisure activities have been defined by previous research as activities that occur during non-work time, provide a sense of happiness, freedom of choice to participate in the activity, and a high level of involvement. How does your definition of leisure activities differ?

What are some of these activities?

What are some of your leisure activities?

How do you think leisure activities relate to social and physical activities?

How would you describe your participation in leisure activities before you moved to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

How often did you engage in these activities?

If they answered did not participate

Why did you not participate?

How did leisure activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED]?

How would you describe your participation in leisure activities at [REDACTED]?

How often do you engage in these activities?

If they answered do not participate

Why do you not participate?

How do [REDACTED] supported leisure activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

Is there anything else you would like to elaborate on or clarify?

Turn the MP3 recording device off.

Okay, thank you for your responses. Your input about your life in [REDACTED] is very much appreciated. I am going to tell you a little bit about what this research was about. The questions and the interview will be used as part of my research for my master's thesis. The principal aim of this research was to investigate how activities influence life satisfaction among adults who live in [REDACTED]. If you would like to know more about this research you can contact me at the email address or telephone number provided in your copy of the informed consent or on the thank you note you received for participating in this research.

As a thank you for participating in the research there is a UF envelope with a formal thank you from me and a \$10 gift card to a local grocery store. Again thank you for your help, and I hope you have a great day.

Collect their study materials. Lock the door to the study room. Then walk the participant to their car.

APPENDIX D
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Participant ID Number 301

Background Questionnaire

1. Please choose the race that best describes you:

- White (non-Hispanic)
- Black or African- American
- Asian
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
- Other race

2. How would you rate your overall health compared to other people your age:

- Much Better
- Better
- About the Same
- Worse
- Much Worse

3. What is your relationship status?

- Married
- Single (Never married)
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Committed Relationship

4. What is the highest level of education you completed?

Some High School

High School

Some College

Undergraduate

Graduate Degree

5. What is the highest level of education your spouse completed (if you answered Single (never married) to question 3, please move to question 6, disregard this question)?

Some High School

High School

Some College

Undergraduate

Graduate Degree

6. Do you have grown children?

Yes (If yes, please proceed to question 7.)

No (If no, please proceed to question 8.)

7. How many children do you have? (Only answer this question if you answered yes to question 6.)

1

2

3

4

5

6 or more

How often do you see them? _____

8. Check the interval that best applies to the estimated value of your home:

Less than \$100,000

\$100,001-\$200,000

\$200,001-\$300,000

\$300,001-\$400,000

\$400,001-\$500,000

More than \$500,001

9. When did you move to [REDACTED]?

Date (Month, Year) _____

10. Where did you live before moving to [REDACTED]? How long did you live there?

APPENDIX E
SWLS QUESTIONS

Participant ID Number 301

Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 7- point scale below, choose a number that represents your agreement or disagreement with each statement. Place that number to the left of the statement. Please be honest in your responses.

- 7 - Strongly Agree
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly Agree
- 4 - Neither Agree or Disagree
- 4 - Slightly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly Disagree

_____ In most ways my life is close to ideal.

_____ The conditions of my life are excellent.

_____ I am satisfied with my life.

_____ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

_____ If I could live my life over I would change almost nothing.

APPENDIX F
IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

In- Depth Semistructured Interview Questions

1)

- Previous research has defined social activities as a set of interactions and relationships between people. How does your definition of social activities differ?
- What are some of these activities?
- What are some of your social activities?
- How do you think social activities relate to physical and leisure activities?
- How would you describe your participation in social activities before you moved to [REDACTED]?
- How often did you engage in these activities?
- If they answered did not participate
- Why did you not participate?
- How did social activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED]?
- How would you describe your participation in social activities at [REDACTED]?
- How often do you engage in these activities?
- If they answered do not participate
- Why do you not participate?
- How do [REDACTED] supported social activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

2)

- Physical activities have been defined by previous research as any body movement that requires energy. How does your definition of physical activities differ?
- What are some of these activities?
- What are some of your physical activities?
- How do you think physical activities relate to social and leisure activities?
- How would you describe your participation in physical activities before you moved to [REDACTED]?
- How often did you engage in these activities?
- If they answered did not participate
- Why did you not participate?
- How did physical activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED]?
- How would you describe your participation in physical activities at [REDACTED]?
- How often do you engage in these activities?
- If they answered do not participate
- Why do you not participate?
- How do [REDACTED] supported physical activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

3)

- Leisure activities have been defined by previous research as activities that occur during non-work time, provide a sense of happiness, freedom of choice to participate in the activity, and a high level of involvement. How does your definition of leisure activities differ?
- What are some of these activities?
- What are some of your leisure activities?
- How do you think leisure activities relate to social and physical activities?
- How would you describe your participation in leisure activities before you moved to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?
- How often did you engage in these activities?
- If they answered did not participate
- Why did you not participate?
- How did leisure activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?
- How would you describe your participation in leisure activities at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?
- How often do you engage in these activities?
- If they answered do not participate
- Why do you not participate?
- How do [REDACTED] supported leisure activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

4) Is there anything else you would like to elaborate on or clarify?

APPENDIX G
IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS- PILOT TEST

In Depth Semi Structured Interview Questions

1)

- How do you define social activities?
- What are some of these activities?
- How would you describe your participation in social activities before you moved to [REDACTED]?
- How often did you engage in these activities?
- How did social activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED]?
- If they answered did not participate
Why did you not participate?
- How would you describe your participation in social activities at [REDACTED]?
- How often do you engage in these activities?
- If they answered do not participate
Why do you not participate?
- How do [REDACTED] supported social activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

2)

- How do you define physical activities?
- What are some of these activities?
- How would you describe your participation in physical activities before you moved to [REDACTED]?
- How often did you engage in these activities?
- If they answered did not participate
Why did you not participate?
- How did physical activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED]?
- How would you describe your participation in physical activities at [REDACTED]?
- How often do you engage in these activities?
- If they answered do not participate
Why do you not participate?
- How do [REDACTED] supported physical activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

3)

- How do you define leisure activities?
- What are some of these activities?
- How would you describe your participation in leisure activities before you moved to [REDACTED]?
- How often did you engage in these activities?
- If they answered did not participate

Why did you not participate?

- How did leisure activities contribute to how satisfied you were before moving to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?
- How would you describe your participation in leisure activities at [REDACTED]?
- How often do you engage in these activities?
- If they answered do not participate
Why do you not participate?
- How do [REDACTED] supported leisure activities contribute to how satisfied you are with life?

4)

- Is there anything else you would like to elaborate on or clarify?

APPENDIX H
IRB PROTOCOL

Erin Smith

UFIRB 02 – Social & Behavioral Research

Protocol Submission

Title of Protocol:

HOW CHANGES IN SOCIAL, PHYSICAL, AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES INFLUENCE LIFE SATISFACTION IN [REDACTED] AMONG OLDER FEMALE ADULTS

Principal Investigator (Name, UFID, Title, Department, Address, Email Address, Telephone Number):

Erin Smith, 6915-9773, Masters Candidate, Family, Youth and Community Sciences, PO Box 110310, Gainesville, FL 32611-0310, Email: erin848e@ufl.edu , Phone: (561) 267-7065

Supervisor- (Name, Title, Department, Address, Email Address, Telephone Number):

Carolyn S. Wilken, Ph.D., Associate Professor- Extension, Family, Youth and Community Sciences, PO Box 110310, Gainesville, FL 32611-0310, Email: cswilken@ufl.edu, Phone: (352) 273-3542

Date of Proposed Research:

August 1, 2009- June 1, 2010

Source of Funding (*A copy of the grant proposal must be submitted with this protocol if funding is involved*):

Self-funded

Scientific Purpose of the Study:

The scientific purpose of this study is to answer the following questions:

- (1) Before moving to [REDACTED] how did social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to a woman's life satisfaction?
- (2) How do [REDACTED] supported social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to a woman's life satisfaction?
- (3) How has life satisfaction changed since moving to [REDACTED]?

Describe the Research Methodology in Non-Technical Language: *(Explain what will be done with or to the research participant.)*

It is anticipated the interview will take between 65 to 90 minutes, depending on the level of conversation. Research interviews will be conducted in a public library at [REDACTED]. The participants will be greeted at the door to the library and shown to a small conference room. After the participants have been given the opportunity to make themselves comfortable; they will be given two copies of the informed consent. They will be given time to look over and sign both copies of the informed consent. The participants will be reminded that the last part of the questionnaire will be recorded, and of the measures that have been taken to ensure confidentiality and privacy. After completing the informed consent, the participants will be asked to answer a series of demographic questions. Following this, the participants will be asked to complete the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, 1985). The next portion of the questionnaire will be recorded so the principal investigator can take notes but also have a complete record of the participants' responses. A semi-structured interview will be used to determine how social, physical, and leisure activities contribute to life satisfaction prior to and since living in [REDACTED]. Participants will be asked to detail their level and pattern of participation in these activities. They will also be asked about how their activities impact their life satisfaction. Hard copies of the instruments are attached.

Describe Potential Benefits and Anticipated Risks: *(If risk of physical, psychological or economic harm may be involved, describe the steps taken to protect participant.)*

There are no direct benefits for participation in this study, immediate or long term. This research study involves no more than minimal risk ordinarily encountered in daily life. All participant identities will remain confidential. Consent forms will be kept in a folder separate from the demographic questions and SWLS. Both the demographic questions and SWLS will be pre-labeled with the participant number. The recordings and transcriptions will be kept in a password protected file saved on a computer. The consent forms, background questions, SWLS, recordings, and transcriptions will be destroyed after the study is completed. The principal investigator is the only person who will have access to the original participant list and the corresponding numbers.

Describe How Participant(s) Will Be Recruited, the Number and Age of the Participants, and Proposed Compensation:

Participants will be recruited using a volunteer sampling approach. Personal contacts living inside [REDACTED] will provide the principal investigator with names, contact information, and information about the study to secondary contacts inside [REDACTED]. This information will be relayed to these secondary contacts via telephone and email. The potential participants will then contact the researcher by phone or email to further discuss the project and to arrange a time for the interview. A total of $N=15$ participants will be interviewed.

Participants must be residents of [REDACTED], between the ages of 60 and 75, and female. Each participant will be compensated for their time with a \$10 gift card to a local grocery store.

Describe the Informed Consent Process. Include a Copy of the Informed Consent Document:

Two informed consent forms will be given to the participant at the beginning of the study. Participants will be given time to read a copy of the informed consent and asked to sign the consent form. Participants will be asked to print, sign, and date their name on the back of the informed consent. One copy of the consent form will be given to the participant and the other copy is for the principal investigator's records. The consent form will include: an introduction to the research and principal investigator, a brief summary of the study, an indication of the amount of time it will take to complete the study, the risks and benefits of participation in the study, the compensation associated with the study, the measures that have been taken to provide confidentiality to the participant, a reminder that participation is voluntary, a reminder of their rights as a participant to withdraw from the study at any time or not answer any question, contact information for the principal investigator, supervisor, and IRB, and a indication of what will be done with the final data.

Principal Investigator Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

I approve this protocol for submission to the UFIRB:

Department Chair/ Center Director Signature

Date

APPENDIX I
IRB APPROVAL

UF Institutional Review Board
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

PO Box 112250
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250
352-392-0433 (Phone)
352-392-9234 (Fax)
irb2@ufl.edu

DATE: August 24, 2009

TO: Erin Smith
PO Box 110310
Campus

FROM: Ira S. Fischler, PhD; Chair *ISF*
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board 02

SUBJECT: **Approval of Protocol #2009-U-844**
How Changes in Social, Physical, and Leisure Activities Influence Life Satisfaction in *...* Among Older Female Adults

SPONSOR: None

I am pleased to advise you that the University of Florida Institutional Review Board has recommended approval of this protocol. Based on its review, the UFIRB determined that this research presents no more than minimal risk to participants. Your protocol was approved as an expedited study under category 7: *Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.*

Given this status, it is essential that you obtain signed documentation of informed consent from each participant. Enclosed is the dated, IRB-approved informed consent to be used when recruiting participants for the research. If you wish to make any changes to this protocol, *including the need to increase the number of participants authorized*, you must disclose your plans before you implement them so that the Board can assess their impact on your protocol. In addition, you must report to the Board any unexpected complications that affect your participants.

It is essential that each of your participants sign a copy of your approved informed consent that bears the IRB approval stamp and expiration date.

Your approval is valid through **August 19, 2010**. If you have not completed the protocol by this date, please telephone our office (392-0433), and we will discuss the renewal process with you. It is important that you keep your Department Chair informed about the status of this research protocol.

ISF:dl

Informed Consent

Please read this document carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

Dear Participant:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project today. This research is being conducted by Ms. Erin Smith, Candidate for a Master's Degree in Family, Youth and Community Sciences at the University of Florida. The principal investigator, Erin Smith is under the supervision of Dr. Carolyn S. Wilken, Associate Professor of Family, Youth and Community Sciences and Extension Specialist in Gerontology at the University of Florida. The purpose of this study is to investigate the affects that activities have on your satisfaction with life with respect to

What you will be asked to do in this study:

You will first be asked to answer basic background questions about yourself. You will then be asked to respond to five questions on your satisfaction with life. Finally, you will be asked to answer a series of questions about your life prior to and while living in and your pattern and level of participation in activities. The last portion of the study will be recorded using a recording device.

Time Required:

Depending on the level of discussion it is expected that the entire study may take between 65-90 minutes.

Risks and Benefits:

There are no perceived risks associated with participating in this study outside of the risk that you take every day by engaging in normal conversation. At any time you may choose not to answer a question or end the interview. There is no immediate or direct benefit for participating in this study.

Compensation:

As a token of appreciation for participating in this study you will receive a \$10 gift card to a local grocery store.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be kept confidential to the fullest extent provided by law. Your name, email address, or telephone number will not be linked with your responses. Responses to paper questionnaires are already labeled using a participant number. The recorded portion of this study will be transcribed, but your name will not be linked to the transcript, instead I will say "Participant 301" at the beginning of the recording. Your name will not be disclosed in any written reports or presentations that may result from this information. The consent form will be kept in a separate file folder from your background information and satisfaction with life questionnaires. The consent form, background information questionnaire, and satisfaction with

life questionnaire will be kept in a locked drawer in the principal investigator's office. The recording and transcription will be saved in a locked file, and will be destroyed once the study is completed. The principal investigator is the only individual with access to these files.

Voluntary Participation:

As a participant in this study your participation is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to leave this study at any time, or to not answer a particular question. There is no penalty for leaving or not answering.

Questions or Comments regarding the study:

If you have questions, comments, or concerns regarding the study please feel free to contact, the principal investigator, Erin Smith or the supervisor of this study, Dr. Carolyn S. Wilken, or the University of Florida Institutional Review Board at the telephone number, email address or street address provided below.

Ms. Erin Smith
erin848e@ufl.edu
(561) 267-7065
P.O. Box 110310
Gainesville, FL 32611-0310

Dr. Carolyn S. Wilken
cswilken@ufl.edu
(352) 273-3542
P.O. Box 110310
Gainesville, FL 32611-0310

University of Florida Institutional Review Board

IRB02 Office
Box 112250
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250
(352) 392-0433.

Agreement:

By signing the line below you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in the research study described above. Your responses will be used to draw conclusions about leisure activities and their impact on life satisfaction in If you would like a copy of the final results please contact Erin Smith. The results will be shared with University of Florida students and faculty, at professional conferences, and in professional publications.

Participant: _____ **Date:** _____

Principal Investigator: _____ **Date:** _____

Faculty Supervisor: _____ **Date:** _____

Approved by
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board 02
Protocol # 2009-U-0844
For Use Through 08-19-2010

APPENDIX J CATEGORIES

Defining Social Activities

“First of all to me social activities means you are with other people. And of course you have to interact with a lot of different personalities.”

“I think of social activities as gathering groups of friends or acquaintances for either a structured evening or a casual evening of impromptu type activities- be it eating, playing games, going to the movie that sort of thing.”

Classifying Social Activities

“Well my social activities are tennis, golf, traveling- we meet a lot of people when we travel.”

“I mean there are probably some days where you don’t do something for a couple of days, but then I had days last week three things in the same day.”

Neighborhoods

“And we still haven’t gone to all the restaurants there are 70 some restaurants here. And we have access to I think ten country clubs and its always interesting to go.”

“We were extremely fortunate with the neighborhood we got into. We have a tremendous I call most of them family that we have become friends with and made acquaintances with.”

Changes in Social Activities

“Well we have slowed down quite a bit.”

“You kind of establish your friendships and kind of go with that. You don’t seek as much or something.”

Comparisons between the LORC and previous home

“My activities here are much better then they were before.”

“Absolutely.” (on comparison between here and previous home)

Thoughts on Spouse

“And he just loved it down here. And he was right it was a good move.”

“He probably has increased the number of activities, social activities he is has ever done...”

How the three types of activities interact

“Pretty well meshed really. A lot of our sports activities are social.”

“I think they keep you active so that you are always bouncing ideas off of other people.”

Negative Aspects of the LORC

“Very much so it so intimidates me.”

“A lot of times people are here a year and then a year later, the second year they have to revamp, and sit back and say okay what is really important.”

Social Activities before moving to the LORC

“So my social life really was built around my employer.”

“A lot of time was spent going to kids games and things like that.”

How social activities influenced life satisfaction before moving to the LORC

“ I socialized to the point where I was happy.”

“Well as time wore on I really wasn’t that satisfied with life up there.”

Neighbors

“And we look after each other and it’s a family.”

“It is amazing how close you get to people when you are 1200 miles away from the rest of your family.”

Defining Physical Activities

“Various forms of exercise.”

“No, and I love that it isn’t just exercise. Because I do yard work, and so I hope that is a little bit of physical activity.”

Classifying Physical Activities

“You know swimming, golf, tennis, I guess those kind of things.”

“I would say probably moderately because a lot of people play pickleball and golf.”

Physical Activities before moving to the LORC

“Cause six at least six months out of the year it is too cold to get outside.”

“In some ways probably a little more.”

Negative Aspects of Physical Activity in the LORC

“And I took some exercise classes up there. I haven’t found one I like here that I have stuck with.”

“I have to do it before it gets hot.”

How physical activities influenced life satisfaction before moving to the LORC

“You know I was very happy, but physical activities never entered my mind.”

“I am sure it contributed. Because when you feel good about yourself it reflects to other people.”

How the LORCs physical activities influence life satisfaction

“A great deal. I am sure that if we had to go somewhere else to do it then because it is so available we just do it.”

“I think I would be satisfied with life even without the physical activities, but it definitely helps.”

Defining Leisure Activities

“For me leisure is fulfilling your time with something you enjoy doing.”

“Usually they are less active”

Classifying Leisure Activities

“Like sitting and listening to music.”

“We get together with friends frequently, a lot of church activities, we go to the movies, I read every minute I can get my hands on.”

Involvement in leisure activities at the LORC

“Everyday. I am always doing something.”

“At least weekly. You know. Sometimes daily, it depends what the week is like.”

Leisure Activities before moving to the LORC

“We did a little bit.”

“It was not as active because I was working.”

Leisure activities before moving to the LORC

“I would say once a week, my husband and I would go out to eat and to a movie.”

“Every once and a while my husband and I would host a party.”

How leisure activities influenced life satisfaction before moving to the LORC

“You know I enjoyed being busy all the time.”

“I thought they were satisfactory.”

How leisure activities influence life satisfaction in the LORC:

“I think it makes a huge difference. I just think they do everything so well.”

“Well I think they contribute a lot because of offering the opportunities...”

APPENDIX K THEMES

Continuity in involvement in social, physical, and leisure activities:

Defining social activities

Classifying social activities

Defining physical activities

Classifying physical activities

Defining Leisure Activities

Classifying Leisure Activities

The importance of neighbors/ structure of the neighborhood:

Neighborhoods

Neighbors

Freedom of choice in activities and people you want to participate with:

Changes in social activities

Involvement in leisure activities at the LORC

Feeling not skilled enough to participate:

Negative Aspects of the LORC

Negative aspects of physical activity in the LORC

Convenience of facilities:

Comparisons between the LORC and previous home

Thoughts on partner

Convenience of activities:

How the three types of activities interact

Involvement in leisure activities at the LORC

Became more involved with one activity:

Social Activities before moving to the LORC

Physical activities before moving to the LORC

Leisure Activities before moving to the LORC

Social contacts:

Changes in social activities

Negative Aspects of the LORC (socially)

Maintained or increased life satisfaction:

How social activities influenced life satisfaction before moving to the LORC

How physical activities influenced life satisfaction before moving to the LORC

How the LORCs physical activities influence life satisfaction

How leisure activities influenced life satisfaction before moving to the LORC

How leisure activities influence life satisfaction in the LORC

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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