

databook (wood)

CASWELL REVISITED:
A TEN-YEAR FOLLOW-UP
ON THE RURAL BY-PASSED ELDERLY

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Life satisfaction. Life satisfaction was reexamined at Round 2 using the Cantril Ladder technique. This procedure uses a ladder with nine rungs and the subject is asked to indicate on the ladder where he or she would rank themselves at the current time: the top represents the best possible life and the bottom the worst possible life. A chi-square test of independence was used to determine the association between Round 1 and Round 2 ratings. Ratings were trichotomized into low, average and high based upon the frequency distribution of scores at Round 1. An additional category, non-survivor, was added to the second category in order to control for sample bias due to mortality of the subjects. Results of the analysis showed ratings in 1986 to be dependent upon ratings in 1976 $\chi^2 (6, N = 346) = 27.21, P < .00011$ (Table 22). More persons with high life satisfaction in 1976 had high satisfaction in 1986 than statistically expected. Fewer adults than expected who scored average on life satisfaction in 1976 had high scores in 1986. A major factor contributing to the significance of the analysis was non-survivors. Proportionally more non-survivors scored low, or were less likely to score high in 1976, than non-survivors. In sum, persons with low or average life satisfaction did not move to higher levels within the ten-year period. Persons high in life satisfaction in 1976 were more likely to report high life satisfaction in 1986. Non-survivors could be distinguished by their lower than expected levels of life satisfaction at Round 1.

Morale. The second analysis, controlling for health, examined morale. Subjects were trichotomized according to the distribution of health scores at Round 1 (poor, good, excellent). Similarly, morale was trichotomized into low, average, and high morale based upon the frequency distribution of scores in 1976. The non-survivorship category was added to the Round 2 categories as a control for sample bias.

Table 22. The Association Between Life Satisfaction in 1976 and 1986 among Older Rural Adults

1976	1986											
	Non-survivor			Life satisfaction								
				Low			Average			High		
Life satisfaction	<u>n</u>	* %	SAR	<u>n</u>	* %	SAR	<u>n</u>	* %	SAR	<u>n</u>	* %	SAR
Low life satisfaction	48	73.8	** 3.5	2	3.1	-1.7	8	12.3	-1.5	7	10.8	-1.8
Average life satisfaction	78	55.3	.3	12	8.5	.1	34	24.1	2.1	17	12.1	** -2.6
High life satisfaction	62	44.3	** -3.1	15	10.7	1.3	23	16.4	-0.9	40	28.6	** 4.0

* Row percentages

** $p < .05$

$\chi^2(6, N = 345) = 27.21, p < .0001$

Note: SAR = Standardized adjusted residual and represents the difference between the observed and expected frequencies.

90. How satisfied are you with your life today? (Not satisfied, satisfied) --- 41
- 1 Not satisfied
2 Satisfied
91. Do you take things hard? --- 42
- 1 Yes
2 No
92. Do you think a person has to live for today and not worry about tomorrow? --- 43
- 1 No
2 Yes
93. Do you get upset easily? --- 44
- 1 Yes
2 No

[NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: THESE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS UTILIZE THE "LADDER"-ACCOMPANYING YOUR MATERIALS HAVE THE PICTURE OF THE "LADDER" IN HAND.]

SAY TO THE RESPONDENT:

94. Here is a picture of a ladder. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder (pointing) represents the best possible life for you and the bottom (pointing) represents the worst possible life for you. Where on the ladder (moving finger up and down ladder) do you feel you stand at the present time? --- 45
- (Code step on ladder)
95. Now look at this ladder once more. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder (pointing) represents perfect health and the bottom (pointing) represents the most serious illness. Where on the ladder (moving finger up and down ladder) would you say your health is at the present time? --- 46
- (Code step on ladder)