



University of Glasgow | School of Social & Political Sciences



FINN'S PLACE

Wellbeing and health: A Qualitative study of perceived health benefits from wellbeing activities delivered at a community-based charity organisation, Finn's Place



A Lay Report from a dissertation presented in part fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Science in Global Health at the University of Glasgow

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Introduction

This report summarises the findings from research done in 2019 as part of a Master's in Global Health degree at the University of Glasgow. It was a collaborative project with Finn's Place, a charitable organisation located in the Southside of Glasgow. Finn's Place aims to be a recognised hub for community health and wellbeing in the Langside and Battlefield community and beyond. To achieve this, Finn's Place provides a variety of wellbeing activities, a supportive environment and hosts events which are open to everyone. According to Finn's Place, wellbeing "*is when we are living our lives to the full, and being the best we can be in body, mind and spirit*".

Finn's Place believes when wellbeing is attained people will be happier and healthier. As there is evidence to show that wellbeing influences health, voluntary and charity organisations such as Finn's Place, that promote health and wellbeing are recognised to be important in tackling burden of health and disease. However, despite the importance, studies show that the concept of wellbeing has no universal definition in many disciplines including health, which was the main interest of this research.

Given this background, I wanted to find out the influence of wellbeing on health by exploring the perceived health benefits that attendants of Finn's Place attribute to engaging in the wellbeing programmes it provides. To understand this, I set out to answer two questions which were:

- 1. What are the health benefits that participants attribute to attending to FP?**
- 2. How does attending activities at FP influence and contribute to participants mental and physical wellbeing and health?**

Methodology

To build rapport and familiarise with Finn's Place, I visited the organisation prior to data collection. This helped to understand Finn's Place aims, values and programmes that it offers to its attendants. Eleven individuals who attend Finn's Place were interviewed six women and five men. I used a topic guide, which had questions that would help understand how participants described the health benefits from Finn's Place.

The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. Thematic analysis was done using NVivo, a computer software, to aid analysis. Names of participants and Finn's Place staff

mentioned in the research were anonymised by assigning fictitious names. The study was approved by the University of Glasgow Ethics committee before any data was collected or any participants were recruited.

Key Findings

The analysis uncovered six themes which captured perceived health benefits of Finn's Place and described how the wellbeing programmes influenced this.

Health Benefits

Mental Health

This was echoed by participants who had experienced mental illness and conditions. In some cases, participants said that their doctors had mentioned improved mental health since involvement with Finn's Place activities.

Physical health

The major physical health benefits that participants spoke of were reduced body pain especially through massage and increased flexibility Keeping fit was also aligned with physical health.

Spiritual Health

Some participants described Finn's Place as a place for spiritual health. Participants seemed to describe spiritual health as growth in faith or a spiritual recovery. For some this was described as fulfilling a spiritual need owing to their spiritual beliefs and they perceived that coming to Finn's Place was beneficial to the spiritual health in that regard.

How wellbeing activities influence health benefits

Social Connections

Making friends and conversing with other people over tea and coffee enabled coping and gave participants a sense of wellbeing which they attributed to better health. For most participants, these built connections



enabled them to maintain contact, travel to different places and even continue activities as groups when Finn's Place closed for breaks.



Keeping Active and Learning

Exercising was described as one of the ways to have better health. Participants described Finn's Place activities as a way to keep active especially for those who had reduced mobility and could not engage in

strenuous exercise.

The information and advice that participants received from the tutors in the wellbeing classes was described to influence better health. Information on healthy diet promoted better eating habits and, in some cases, the tutors' advice was sought when attendants had minor injuries.

A welcoming and friendly environment

All participants mentioned how Finn's Place welcoming and friendly environment made them feel positive. These feelings seemed to be aligned with wellbeing and health.



Within this theme, participants appeared to attribute wellbeing

and health to the supportive environment and empathy of staff at Finn's Place. Others highlighted that it was safe place and refuge owing to the which they suggested to be beneficial for their spiritual wellbeing and health.

Conclusion

The findings supported what Finn's Place aims to achieve, to promote wellbeing so that people live happier and healthier. The mental, physical and spiritual health benefits derived from the programmes at Finn's Place, are in line with the organisation's definition of wellbeing which is, *'when we are living our lives to the full, and being the best we can be in body, mind and spirit'*. Finn's Place five ways to wellbeing play an important role in contributing to health and

wellbeing as building connections, keeping active and learning was echoed in the research. This highlights that Finn's Place is achieving what it set out to do and that it plays a crucial role in health and wellbeing promotion of those who come.

Recommendations

It would be of benefit for Finn's Place to attract more attendants as this has the potential to promote health and wellbeing not only in the Langside and Battlefield community but beyond that as well.