

Life Satisfaction among Elderly People Living with Family and Living in Old Age Home

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Abstract

Old age is the closing period of the life span. It is a period when people 'move away' from previous more desirable periods or times of 'usefulness'. The main objective of the study is to assess the level of life satisfaction among elderly people living in old age home and living with their family and to assess the life satisfaction between male and female elderly people. The research samples consisted of 120 elderly people age varying from 60 to 75 years, were selected using purposive sampling methods. All the participants were assessed individually by Pavot W. and Deiner (2006) the satisfaction with life. Proper statistical treatment was applied in order to obtain the result. The study has shown that the life satisfaction was more in people who lived with their family than who lived at old age home and it also states that it has not differentiated in the elderly male and female people.

Key Words: Life satisfaction, Positive Psychology, Elderly people

Introduction

Old age is the closing period of the life span. It is a period when people 'move away' from previous more desirable periods or times of 'usefulness'. Old age is considered as a curse, being associated with deterioration of all physical, psychological factors, isolation from social, economic, and other activities. Socially, this stage was considered as the sum total of one's lived experiences. Hence, the society offered a space of respect to the old. In such a society, the aged were the repositories, transmitters, and sole authorities of wisdom and knowledge. All these provided a 'golden age' concept to this stage, old age.

The aging process is of course a biological reality which has its own dynamic, largely beyond human control. However, it is also subject to the constructions on the basis of which each society makes sense of old age. The age 60 or 65, roughly equivalent to retirement ages in most developed countries is said to be beginning of old

age. In many parts of the developing, chronological time has little or no importance in the meaning of old age. Other socially constructed meanings of age are more significant such as roles assigned to older people; in some cases, it is the loss of role accompanying the physical decline which is significant in defining age. Thus, in contrast to the chronological milestones which mark life stages in the developed world, old age in many developing countries is seen to be at the point when active contribution is no longer possible (Gorman, 1999).

Life satisfaction

Diener (1984) defined life satisfaction as "a cognitive judgemental global evaluation of one's life. It may be influenced by affect but is not itself a direct measure of emotion". The definition highlights the distinction between the subcategories of subjective well-being.

In simple words we can define life satisfaction as the feeling of contentment

and happiness the aged individuals has especially form their past life. Life satisfaction is one of the simple but meaningful as well as complicated concepts that are assumed to reflect the conditions 'a good life'.

It is also important to note that episodes in a person's past can impinge on their attitudes to latter life. Obviously, decisions about careers, relationships, whether to have children and so forth have a direct impact. Stalling et al. (1997) found that negative events in a person's life tend to affect the negative aspect of the mood of a person and positive events the positive aspects, with minimal crossover influences.

According to Seligman, the field of positive psychology focuses on improving life and well-being through enhancing strengths and positive characteristics of individuals, rather than through treatments of and focus on mental illness. Thus, in seeking to increase the well-being of older adults, positive psychology studies imply that life satisfaction can be improved through a focus on individual strengths and characteristics (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi 2000).

Statement of the problem

To find out life satisfaction of elderly people living at old age home and living with their family.

Objective of the Study

1. To measure level of life satisfaction among elderly people living in old age home and living with their family.
2. To assess the life satisfaction between male and female elderly people.

Hypothesis

1. There will be no significant difference in life satisfaction among living

in old age home and living with their family.

2. There will be no significant difference between male and female in terms of life satisfaction.

Sample

The samples consisted of 120 elderly people age varying from 60 to 75 years (living with their family 30 male and 30 females, living in old age 30 male and 30 female), were selected from middle class socioeconomic status of aged. The purposive sampling method was used to collect the data. The sample was selected in various areas and various old age homes in Pune City.

Variables

Independent Variables –

- a) Living with their family
- b) Living in old age home

Dependent variables-

Life satisfaction

Tools Used in the study

Following tools were used for the present investigation:

The data for present study was collected with help of Pavot W. and Deiner (2006) the satisfaction with life. This scale has been used heavily as a measure of the life satisfaction component of subjective well-being. This test score correlate with measure of mental health. The SWLS is a 7-point Likert style response scale. The coefficient alpha for the scale has ranged from 0.79 to 0.89, indicating that the high internal consistency. The scale was also found to have good test-retest correlations (.84 to .80 over month interval)

Procedure

At the start of study, researcher has taken some basic demographic information from

participant, such as age, sex, marital status, and type of education. The elderly participant was given the option of reading and filling in questionnaire themselves or having researcher read out the questionnaire and record responses of them.

Statistical Analysis

The researcher used statistically analysis with the help of Mean, S.D., and ANOVA.

Table No.1 Descriptive statistics of males and females who are staying with family and in old age life satisfaction.

Descriptive Statistics: Life Satisfaction

Family type	Gender	Mean	SD	N
Staying with family	Male	24.44	5.15	30
	Female	25.30	5.10	30
	Total	24.87	5.08	60
Staying at old age home	Male	22.24	6.50	30
	Female	23.17	6.20	30
	Total	22.70	6.30	60

The above table shows descriptive statistics for variables life satisfaction.

The above table provides the cell mean scores and marginal mean scores, standard deviations and N for each subgroup of two

independent variables and their life satisfaction is treated as dependent variable. Inspecting these values give us an indication of the impact of independent variable.

Mean differences on Life satisfaction

Table no.4 Summary of two- way ANOVA for life Satisfaction

Source	Type III sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	P
Living status	346.32	1	346.32	10.121	0.01
Gender	84.20	1	84.20	2.250	NS

For the variable of life satisfaction, it shows that F value for the first main effect that is living status is 10.121. Thus, it is showing that the figure the statistically significant.

As the obtained F (1296) =10.121, $p < 0.001$, It is statistically significant. This

effect was related to the type who represents the family and comparison between the means of the living with their family and living at old age home. The means for the life satisfaction of the people living with family (M= 24.87, SD = 5.08) was more than living at old age home (M= 22.70, SD= 6.30). This obviously means

that the life satisfaction is more in elderly people who lived with their family and who lived at old age home.

The F value of second main effect i.e., for gender effect is 2.250, $p = NS$ statistically not significant. The effect related to gender is representer to compare between the means for males and females elderly people in terms of life satisfaction. The means of the male ($M = 23.34$, $SD = 6.17$) is equal to female ($M = 24.23$, $SD = 5.24$). This obviously means that life satisfaction is equal and it has not differentiated in the elderly male people and female people.

This study indicates that life satisfaction was more in people who lived with their family than who lived at old age home and it also states that it has not differentiated in the elderly male and female people.

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Conclusions

Some of the conclusions drawn from the analysis of data are given below:

In short, it is concluded that there is no significance difference found between male and female elderly people in terms of life satisfaction. But there was significant difference found between people who lived with their family and who lived at old age home in terms of life satisfaction.

Limitation of the present study

The following are limitations of the present study:

1. The sample size was very small and restricted to only elderly people male and women.
2. It was limited to 60 to 75 years.