



A STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE EXTENSION OF SUPPORT ON LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG ELDERLY PEOPLE

KEYWORDS

Life Satisfaction, Extension of support

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ABSTRACT

Life satisfaction is one of the clear indicators of quality of life. It is the perception of an individual towards various aspects in their life. The level of satisfaction among the aged effects not only their psychological adjustment but also physical, emotional and social well-being. Due to globalization changes had taken place in the economic structure, erosion in societal values, weakening of social values, and disintegration of joint family into nuclear family. As a result, the traditional sense of duty and obligation of the younger generation towards their older generation has gradually decreased. The older generation is caught between the decline in traditional values on one hand and the absence of adequate social security system on the other (Gormal 2003). Hence the present study focuses on the influence of extension of support on life satisfaction among elderly. 209 respondents were selected for the study using simple random sampling method. The study is descriptive in nature.

Introduction

Life satisfaction among the elderly in the overall view is the adjustment and coping ability of the individual. It differs from person to person. Those elderly who are physically fit and healthy enough to perform daily activities by themselves, feels satisfaction in life than the others who are dependent. Population-based studies including mixed samples of older people have demonstrated that several aspects contribute to life satisfaction. For instance, in a study including 105 older people, aged 90 and above, impaired health showed a low correlation to life satisfaction. However, personality was more strongly related to life satisfaction (Hilleras et al. 2001).

Aging can be described as a progressive deterioration of the physical and mental function resulting in a simultaneous decline in both the capacity of body to maintain homeostatic balance as well as adaptability of the individuals to various stresses thereby consequently increasing the chances of illness and mortality (Dey, 2003). Family care and support come in different forms, for instance functional, financial or emotional. Emotional or financial support can be provided across geographic distances but the ability to provide functional care on a regular basis is strongly dependent on geographic proximity. Geographic distance is a major restriction for the ability of taking care of family members on a regular basis. In a survey in Sweden 28 percent of those who claimed that they had a parent in need of support stated that they could not assist because of geographic distance (Malmberg and Sundström 2006). The present is about the influence of extension of support on life satisfaction among elderly.

Review of Literature

Gana K, Bailly N, Saada Y, Joulain M, Alaphilippe D. (2013) findings from both unconditional and conditional model (in which time-invariant, i.e., age, gender, and education, and time-varying, i.e., self-perceived health, covariates were incorporated in the model) indicated a linear increase in LS for the 8-year period. As expected, the results showed significant random variation in both intercept and slope, indicating that participants start at different levels and change at different rates.

Yuval Palgi and Dov Shmotkin (2009), studied the old-old — people who were primarily in their nineties. This subject group

was found to have thought highly of their past and present. But generally the group thought lower of their future. These people were very satisfied with their life up until the point they were surveyed but knew that the end was near and so were not quite as hopeful for the future. A large factor that was talked about in life satisfaction was intelligence. The experiments talk of how life satisfaction grows as people become older because they become wiser and more knowledgeable, so they begin to see that life will be better as they grow older and understand the important things in life more.

Studies carried out by Das and Satsangi (2008) and Shyam and Devi (2006) in India. They found significant positive correlation between social support, life satisfaction and subjective well being among elderly Indians. Panda (2005) also observed that elderly women with good support from their children were satisfied with life than others. It was noted that relational variable rather than economic indicators might be stronger in influencing the life satisfaction among aged women. Similar result was observed by Ishizawa (2004) and Wang et.al (2002) in Japan. They pointed out that life satisfaction is influenced by social support from others among Japanese elderly.

Several studies have shown that functional support is more prevalent from the older to the younger generation rather than the other way around: older generations are very important providers of financial, emotional and functional support to younger generations (Albertini, Kohli and Vogel 2007, Halleröd 2006, Hoff 2007).

Jain and Sharma (2004) indicated that productive engagement in work play a vital role in the quality of life of Indian elderly people.

Baltes and Smith (2003) put it, healthy and successful aging has its age limits: life satisfaction in old age is assumed to be inevitably affected by health. A second point to take into account, therefore, is that any analysis of life satisfaction among the oldest old must recognize the important role of health status.

Bengtson (2001) argues that as the demographic ageing process is resulting in "longer years of shared lives between gener-

ations" intergenerational relations are becoming increasingly important to individuals, and that especially grandparents will have an increasingly important function in family life. Not only the timing of childbearing, but also the number of children, is important for the emergence of multigenerational families. The more children you have, the more likely it is that you will have become a grandparent at a given age. The likelihood of not becoming a grandparent at all is naturally higher if you only have one child.

Methods & Materials

Objectives:

1. To assess the demographic profile of the respondents
2. To assess the level of life satisfaction of the respondents
3. To assess the influence of extension of support on life satisfaction of the elderly

The study is descriptive in nature. The Coimbatore City Corporation has 100 wards out of that ward no: 72 were selected by simple random sampling method. The voters list was collected from the area councilor to have a list of the population in order to identify the elderly people who were 65 and above. The ward consists of 40 streets. The total population was 10960. Elderly people, who were 65 and above were 715, out of those 209 respondents were selected. The tools used for data collection was based on review of literature. The collected data were analyzed by using SPSS.

Results & Discussion

Differences between the mean scores of the life satisfaction of the elderly in terms of their age group, education, income and availability of children

Sl. No	Variables	Category	No	Mean	SD
1.	Age	65-70	104	21.9135	4.0677
		71-75	59	20.1017	4.2414
		76-80	26	20.0000	2.9530
		81 & above	20	21.5500	4.4423
2.	Education	Graduates /Post	8	21.8750	4.1384
		Graduates	86	21.7093	2.1671
		High School	56	21.6071	3.2512
		Primary Illiterate	59	19.7288	4.6824
3.	Family Income	Without Income	88	21.0795	4.5213
		With Income	121	21.1653	3.7911
4.	Availability of Children	Only Sons	32	21.4375	5.0669
		Only Daughters	27	21.5185	2.8739
		Both Sons and Daughters	137	21.5036	3.5233
		No Children	13	15.6154	5.6501

The mean scores of the above table shows that the young-old, i.e. in the age group of 65-70 years have more satisfaction in their life than others and the respondents who are above 80 years are relatively less satisfied.

- The mean scores shows that those who are educated up to high school level have more satisfaction in their life than others.
- Among the elderly, income doesn't show any difference in the life satisfaction of the elderly.
- Those elderly who have children are satisfied in life than those who have no children.

Regression of Life Satisfaction on Socio-economic variables

Independent Variables	Beta	Sig
Age	-.016	.809
Education	-.192	.008
Family Size	.075	.288
Family Income	.198	.009
Number of available adult children	.070	.295
R2	.125	
N	209	

As observed from the beta values of the above table education has significant negative effect while family income has significant positive effect on life satisfaction. All the five independent variables together explain 12.5 percent of variation in life satisfaction of the elderly.

Level of Life Satisfaction of the Respondents

Life Satisfaction	Percentage	Mean	SD
Low	6.2	2.11	.477
Moderate	76.1		
High	17.7		

The above table shows that majority of the respondents have life satisfaction at moderate level.

Regression of Life Satisfaction on Extension of Support

Beta	t	Sig	R2	F	Sig
.400	6.274	.000	.160	39.361	.000

The Beta Co-efficient in the above table shows that extension of support has significant positive effect on life satisfaction. The R square value shows that extension of support explains 16.0 percent of variation in life satisfaction.

Conclusion

Life satisfaction is an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a particular point in time ranging from negative to positive. It is one of three major indicators of well-being: life satisfaction, positive effect, and negative effect (Diener, 1984). The study reveals that education has significant negative effect while family income and extension of support has significant positive effect on life satisfaction. Majority of the respondents have life satisfaction at moderate level.

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