

Research Article

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COMPONENTS RELATED TO THE ELDERLY'S LIFE QUALITY

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, the adult aged phenomenon and its problem are the most important issues considered by different science thinkers. The respect and attention toward adult –aged has been a convention for many years so that it is a special day for them in Iran. This research is about the effect of social and cultural factors related to adult aged's life quality. This study is according to functional and structural approach.

The aim of this research is the effect of social and cultural components related to the elderly people's life quality. Theoretical framework of this research consists of functional and structural theories, a life quality theory and social support theory.

Keywords: *Elderly People's Life Quality, Social Support, Social Participation*

INTRODUCTION

If we don't pay attention to elderly people population and not to notice safe solution It changes into serious problems for countries. The main challenge of world countries in twentieth century was to stay alive while today's challenge is to live with better quality. The elderly people's problem of Iran population appears because of various reasons such as decreasing in the number of birth, medical science improvement, health, education and increasing life desire and this problem is a new one. It is so important to improve mental, physical and social elderly people's conditions by adopting suitable policies since this phenomenon creates significant changes in whole aspects of human life, criteria, values and social organs. Elderliness period is noticed as a social problem in many communities because of its quick growth and effect on social and economic conditions. This research follows sociologic study of social, cultural and family components related to elderly people's life quality in Golestan province.

Social variables in this research are social, emotional, informational and instrumental support, social participation and mental health. Cultural independent variables are family dependency, social and cultural commitment of family members, religiosity rate, social and economical base and health services. Family variables are elderly people's dependence to their children, children presence, and respect given to adult aged people in their families. Generally in this survey we have investigated the relationship between mentioned variables and population variables such as age, marital status and the dependent variable of the research, namely, the life quality of elderly people.

Related Works

In a survey conducted by Flavio and his Colleagues (2003), the opinions of elderly people were asked about their life quality. According to the obtained results %57 people have evaluated their life quality positive and %18 have evaluated it negative.

Brooklyn and his colleagues studied the experience of life quality among elderly people through phenomenological method and qualitative interview. The results of the study have shown the image which elderly people have about their importance in their mind and the importance of their position has affected their life quality.

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The Importance and Necessities of Research

In Iran, with the appearance of population control effects from 1991, the number of people who are under 15 years old has been decreased and the number of people who are between 15 to 64 years old has been increased.

The continuation of this situation in the future can change the population age combination and dramatically increase the number of people who are under fifteen-year-old and lead the population to the old age.

We can say in these conditions that the importance and necessity of this research is to identify social and economic problems of old people and suggest solution for improvement of their social, economic and family conditions and for improving life quality of them in Golestan province.

Zakaria seraji investigated social support and sex differences and these qualitative and quantitative effects of this bilateral relationship among adult aged people.

The result of this research showed that women receive more and variable support than men from their family members. In the field of giving services men present more financial and informational support and women present other supports such as emotional support and services.

Describing Conceptual Model

Lee with others has given a model in relation to life quality. According to this model, the conceptual structure of life quality should include at least four dimensions and two objective and subjective axes. Subjective life satisfaction is identified by objective life conditions; hierarchical system of life's needs and compared standards with present life of a person.

Evaluation is based on life experience, personality and personal resources in cultural, social and environmental network.

World life quality model based on Vantgoat and his colleagues` view is as follow:

The life quality theory is a general theory with more than 8 real theories in one objective – existential and objective range (Vantgoat *et al.*, 2003)

So life satisfaction defines this aspect of life.

Existential life quality is having enjoyed in deeper level. An assumption is that one has a deeper nature according to it he can live with respect and his nature in this approach.

If physiological needs resolves for example, development will reach to the full extend and life conforms to mental index or religious belief. Objective life quality is to understanding how to have enjoyable life by one`s environment is objective life quality. And it is affected by culture of people live there (Dottgoat and Others, 2003). Frans in his understanding theory knows 4 variables, such as social, economic and mental condition effective as following. They can have effect independently or together on creating life quality.

Of course, one`s understanding of life quality also can have effect on mentioned variable so that this decrease life quality affected on his business and workplace and causes decrease social and economic condition. Having a poor quality can affect on family relation and also can cause confronting mechanism and useless adaption and subsequently increase stress and this is directly related to physical factors that can increase illness. As we can see life quality should be evaluated which is multi – dimension and complex concept (Frans, 1992).

This recent research is used to achieve accurate explanation and according to this description theory .we can say the main approach used in this research is life quality as multi –dimension conception included physical – mental health and social, cultural relation of health.

It is used life quality theory (Lee, Zan, Frans) in this research.

Government should prepare housing security, medical facilities, health and life security for elderly people. The population of elderly people will double in a short time.

According to recent research, elderly people get less illness like depression and forgetting unless they have various happy and easy works such as gardening handi – craft arts studying and cooking. Therefore

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they will find positive and strong morale if their children take care of them in family environment. Studies also are shown that living in elderly people's sanatorium at the corner of an apartment and at separated environment have negative effect on their morale and not only increase their problems but also gradually and seriously damage their physical and mental health. You imagine the effect of separation from family on elderly people instead of special notice to them. It is necessary to strengthen relation between generations, strengthen elderly position and his family notice health, illness prevention and limit pension house, strengthen and develop daily house for elderly people. So nowadays elderly people's village is not right principle to separate them from family and society. Nowadays we should educate children and teenagers to respect and accept elderly people in family who are spiritual treasure of community. Lack of feeling damages them and causes irreparable problem. Our duty as government is to provide social platform for active presence for them.

Making daily school that is serious for organs and non-profit schools can improve social and family atmosphere and has an important role for elderly people. Separating elderly people from society is very dangerous for our future community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Elderliness has a potential characteristic that can assist the family and community and be appeared as an active and healthy elderly person.

In order to achieve optimum quality life in elderliness period, we should consider all the aspects of elderliness period such as physical and mental health, social, economic and cultural issues. Since many elderliness-related diseases and problems are because of unhealthy life way, we should structure the basis of elderly person's health from the first stages of life using the right method.

We suggests following in order to plan condition and improve life method and quality and create life satisfaction for adult aged people.

- Providing the possibility of presence continuation of elderly people in Golestan province.
- Putting an emphasis on respecting to elderly persons in Golestan province.
- Providing the possibility of elderly people's participation in community and non- profit institutes
- Have a good policy to provide health security for elderly people in Golestan province.
- Creating necessary action to support experience transmission from elderly people to young people.
- Create safe job according to elderly person's mental and physical ability to strengthen their confidence and retrieval talent and improve financial situation.

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