

Identifying and Examining the Individual and Social Dimensions of Increasing the Quality of Life of the Elderly Based on the Verses of the Quran and Narrations

Mahdis Hamzeshi¹ , Marziyeh Raji^{2*} , Ali Mohammad Farhadzadeh³ 

1- Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management, Anzali Azad University, Anzali, Iran.

2- Department of Theology, Faculty of Theology, Farabi Campus, University of Tehran, Qom, Iran.

3- Department of Education, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.

*Correspondence should be addressed to Ms. Marziyeh Raji; Email: misaghraja@gmail.com

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Abstract

Background and Objective: Today, due to the increase in longevity and life expectancy, a more important issue has been raised as how to live life or the quality of life, which has attracted the attention of experts and researchers in the field of aging. The present study examines the concept of quality of life in old age.

Methods: This research is qualitative in terms of method. It first analyzes the resources related to the quality of life of the elderly through meta-combination method. It was then carried out using interpretive structural modeling technique. MICMAC method was also used to cluster the dimensions of the quality of life in old age. In this study, all ethical considerations were observed and no conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Results: Based on the findings, five dimensions were identified by experts and finally the identified dimensions were classified into 5 level: at the highest level (first level) was the social interactions, which has the least influence on other factors, and at the lowest level (fifth level) was individual-internal factors that act as the cornerstone of the model. Therefore, increasing the quality of life of the elderly starts from this variable and spreads to other variables. The results of MICMAC analysis also showed that individual-internal factors have the highest influence and social interactions the most dependent.

Conclusion: Based on the results of the present study, it can be concluded that individual-internal factors and family experiences affect the quality of life of the elderly, which can ultimately increase the health of the elderly due to the influence of environmental factors. Identifying and promoting any of these dimensions can lead to an increase in the quality of life of the elderly.

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Summary

Background and Objective

Today, due to the increase in the index of life expectancy and life expectancy, a more important issue has been raised as the way of life and, in other words, the quality of life, which has attracted the attention of experts and researchers

in the field of old age. The elderly population is probably the most important demographic phenomenon in the world at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. According to the United Nations Information Center in Tehran, the number of elderly people in Iran will reach 26 million 393 thousand people in 2050, accounting for 26% of the total population. According to the mentioned statistics, it can be

stated that in the current situation, Iran is moving from a young population to a middle-aged population and will soon join the group of countries with an old population composition (1).

Anthropologically and philosophically, old age is divided into two periods in Iran: one is "Mubarak", which begins from the age of 60 and continues until the age of 70; the other period is "late" which begins from the age of 70 and continues until the end of life (2). Old age has a high and special position in Islam. Therefore, the Quran not only deals with this period of life but also refers to the way of dealing with the elderly and advises not to drive them away; in the narrations, they have been considered as a source of blessing, mercy, and increase in blessings (3). Due to physical and mental disabilities, in many cases, their individual independence is threatened (4). Since most of the elderly live with chronic illnesses and ongoing treatment (5, 6), these factors can reduce the quality of their life. Quality of life is a complex concept that can be influenced by many factors in each period of life and is completely individual and depends on the personal understanding of each person, which can cover several objective and mental domains (7). The results of studies show that most of the studies on the quality of life in people under 65 years of age have been quantitative and few qualitative studies have emphasized the life experience of the elderly. The findings of the present study clarify the understanding of the concept, dimensions and the factors affecting the quality of life of the elderly. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to investigate the concept of quality of life in old age.

The main research questions addressed in the present study are:

What are the dimensions of the quality of life in old age?

What are the indicators of the quality of life in old age?

What is the economic model of the quality of life in old age?

Methods

Compliance with ethical guidelines: In the present study, participants were given sufficient information about the research nature of the questionnaires and the purpose of the research, and individuals were reassured that their information would remain confidential. Participants participated in the study voluntarily and consciously and with full satisfaction.

A review of the literature shows that the dimensions of quality of life of the elderly are one

of the most important issues in any society, especially in the current Iranian society. Therefore, it is necessary to properly know the dimensions and quality of life indicators of the elderly. Therefore, extensive literature on the dimensions of quality of life in the elderly has been presented and each of the thinkers in this field has mentioned one. However, so far no comprehensive and operational model has not been presented in the field of the relationship between dimensions and quality of life indicators of the elderly. In the present study, researchers first reviewed the literature on the quality of life in old age, its dimensions and characteristics. Then, 19 experts and specialists in the field of geriatrics evaluated and finalized the obtained dimensions and indicators using the Delphi method. The method used in this study is qualitative in that it examines and analyzes the sources related to the subject and then the structural-interpretive approach was used for analyzing and extracting the quality of life model of old age. The researcher developed a conceptual model because in qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, in which a theoretical model is designed, the goal is to design a conceptual model. Structural-interpretive modeling method was used to conduct this study. This method is an interactive learning process in which a set of different and interrelated elements are structured in a comprehensive systematic model (8).

Results

The experts identified five dimensions and finally the identified dimensions were classified into five levels. At the highest level (first level) were the social interaction, which has the least influence on other factors, and at the lowest level (fifth level) was individual-internal factors, which acted as the cornerstone of the model. Therefore, the increase in quality of life in old age starts from this variable and spreads to other variables. The results of MICMAC analysis also showed that individual-internal factors were the most influential and social interactions were the most dependent.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the present study, it can be inferred that individual-internal factors and family experiences affect the quality of life of the elderly and can ultimately increase the health of the elderly by environmental factors. Accurate identification and promotion of each of these dimensions can also lead to an increase in the quality of life of the elderly. In his research, Ismaili concluded that quality of life in old age is

a complex and subjective concept with six main dimensions: internal personal factors, external individual factors, health, family experiences, social interactions and environmental factors. The results of the present study confirmed this (9). In another study, Kazemi concluded that educational, nutritional, and sports interventions, marriage, higher education, living at home, internal religious orientation, social participation, social support, physical health, and good socioeconomic status and appropriate employment increased the quality of life of the elderly will. The results of the present study also confirm the findings of this study (10).

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Ethical considerations

The authors declared the Ethics Committee in Biomedical Research of Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences has confirmed this research with the letter No. 1400/D/25781.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

Authors' contribution

Data collection, interview and statistical analysis: First author; collection of materials and summary: Second author; and collection of materials: Third author.

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