Title: Successful Aging: Some Psychosocial Correlates

Abstract

Rapid population growth spurt of the elderly people in India as well as all over the world makes it necessary to study the elderly people so as to help them remain integrated with the society. In this study life satisfaction, activity level and engagement with life has been used as measures of successful aging. Different character strengths viz. wisdom, forgiveness and gratitude along with self evaluative variable of generalized self efficacy and participants’ evaluation of quality of life are assessed in this study and are together referred to as psycho-social factors.

The present study has been conducted on a sample of 206 male and female community living elderly people living in the city of Kolkata within an age range of 65 and 75 years with a minimum education of 15 years. The present study attempted to find out the difference between male and female elderly people with respect to measures of successful aging as well as with respect to psycho-social factors. It also purported to find out the nature of relationship between the measures of successful aging and the different psycho-social factors as well as to find out the contributory effect of different psycho-social factors on measures of successful aging.

Socio-demographic Information Schedule, Short Test of Mental Status, The Satisfaction With Life Scale, Groningen Activity Restriction Scale, Engagement with Life Scale, Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale, Generalised Self Efficacy Scale, Heartland Forgiveness Scale, The Gratitude questionnaire and World Health Organisation Quality of Life –BREF were administered in the course of the study. The data obtained was analysed using appropriate statistical analysis by software SPSS 21.

The findings of the study show that there is a significant difference between male and female elderly people with respect to measures of successful aging, viz. life satisfaction and activity level. Difference is found also in domains of physical health quality of life and environmental quality of life. Various psycho-social factors have been found to be related to successful aging at significant level. Several psycho-social factors have been found to impact the measures of successful aging in the male and female elderly people. The results have been discussed in light of existing knowledge.