Research Paper

Life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to demographic variable

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ABSTRACT

The Study was conducted with a view to find out the relation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people with their sex, marital status, educational qualification, socio-economic status and types of residence. The samples of the present study comprised of 197, their age range from 65 to 90 years recruited from two old home institutes and outside of old home institute situated in same area. Data were collected by using Life satisfaction scale (SWLS) developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin (1985) and Bengali version was adapted by Ilyas (2002). The findings of present study are indicating strong relation of marital status, educational qualification, socio- economic status and living situation with life satisfaction, but in this study, we have not found any differences of life satisfaction with sex differences in the perspective of Bangladesh.

Keywords: *Life satisfaction, elder age*

Life satisfaction is the main expectation of human life. People try to achieve this goal throughout in their life. Life satisfaction is different in various stages of life (Doyle & Forehand, 1984). According to Erikson (1963) people proceed through eight stages of psychosocial development across their life (An & Cooney, 2006). The last and eight stages is integrity vs. despair. The duration of this stage from 65 to death this is known as old age. This period is reflecting on life. The elderly person may experience satisfaction or a sense of failure. They evaluate their whole life and find themselves were they satisfied or not. In response to this older people become preoccupied with the past. Some become preoccupied with their failures, the bad decisions they made and regret that (unlike some in the previous stage) they really don't have to time or energy to reverse them. Along with these retirement, deterioration of health, and loss of spouse experienced in the aging process may affect the life satisfaction (Chen, 2001).

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 affect (Diener, 1984). Different study describe the relationship between life satisfaction, happiness and current mood of

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elder people (Gamble & Gärling, 2012). Peterson, Park, and Seligman (2005) measured life satisfaction in three different ways such as- through pleasure, engagement and meaning to be happy. Each of these individually predicted life satisfaction. If, all are fulfilled, people deserve the satisfactory life. On the other hand, the underachievers deserve the low life satisfaction. In studies, it was found that life satisfaction among the elderly people decreased as age increased beyond 65 years of age. It was also found that social demographic variables, an income decrease, living arrangement, and level of activity participation have a profound impact on life satisfaction of elderly people (Chen, 2001). A number of studies, which considered sex differences in the correlates of elderly well-being, have observed that the same conditions do not apply in the same ways to the subjective well-being of older men and women, and have emphasized the importance of separate analyses by sex (Berg, Hassing, McClearn, & Johansson, 2006; Mroczek & Kolarz, 1998; Pinquart & Sörensen, 2001). Marital status is related to life satisfaction across all ages, also in old age. Among a range of life events, the effects of marriage and bereavement are the only events that have been found to influence level of life satisfaction positively respectively over longer periods of time. In general, indicate that being married is associated with higher life satisfaction when compared with the divorced and widowed in elder age (Fengler, Danigelis, & Grams, 1982). The education is correlated with life satisfaction (Amaike, 2014). Socio-economic status, different types of residence influence the life satisfaction of elderly people was also found (Devi, KavithaKiran, & Swachita, 2015).

It is expected that the study will become very much crucial in Bangladesh because the life expectancy has increased in the recent years and there is no such relevant significant studies which is held in Bangladesh on elder aged people. It can also be said that study will assist the interested people to comprehend about factors which demographic variables is playing a catalyst role in life satisfaction. The study is mainly conducted with the purpose of finding the relationship between sex, marital status, educational qualification, socio-economic status, types of residence (with family, institute, single) with life satisfaction. The specific objectives are to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to their sex, marital status, educational qualification and their residence.

METHODOLOGY

Participant

The sample of the present study comprised 197 elderly aged participants whose age range was 65 to 90 year. They were from diverse marital status, educational qualification, socio-economic status and types of residence (like with family, institute and single). The design of this study was survey design. It used the systematic collection technique for sampling about specific group of people (elderly aged people), living in a specific geography, culture or administrative areas. They were selected from the target population by purposive sampling method. The data of the study was collected from two old home institutes a) Old Home Rehabilitation Centre, Gazipur and b) Probin Nibash and Hospital Agargoan, Dhaka and outside of old home institute situated in same area.

Measuring instruments

The following instruments were used to collect data of the present study. i) personal information questionnaire ii) life satisfaction scale.

1. **Personal information questionnaire (PIQ).** Personal information questionnaire was used to collect information about 65to 90 years older people. In personal information questionnaire their age, gander, marital status, education, socio-economic status and type of residence is listed.

2. **Life satisfaction scale.** Bengali version of Life satisfaction scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) was used to measure life satisfaction. The scale has been extensively used and has proven to be applicable to adult age groups (Pavrot & Diener, 19193). SWLS is a five-item scale that measures perceived life satisfaction. The SWLS is rated on 7-point Likert scales (1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree), and the response were summed to produce a total score. Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with life. Internal consistency of SWLS items was 0.80. Significant correlation [r (48) = 0.805, p<0.005] between sores of English and Bengali versions indicated translation reliability of the scale. The internal consistency of this study has been Cronbach's Alpha (α) of 0.604.

Procedure

To conduct this study researcher firstly seeking permission from the institute. After getting permission a written explanatory statement was provided which contains the purpose, procedure and benefits of the research. Besides, the researcher verbally described the content of explanatory statement for low literacy participants. After providing the instruction, participants who are ready to participate were requested to give signature on consent paper. All interviews were conducted under face to face setting. Participants were given scale and give instruction to read this carefully and then put the tick mark on life satisfaction scale ranging from agree (7) to disagree (1). The duration of the interview session ranged from 15 to 20 minutes. Participant's responses were scored according to the scoring system of life satisfaction scale separately. To analyze the collected data SPSS 20 version was used.

RESULTS

The collected data has been analyzed by descriptive statistics, mean (x), standard Deviation (SD), t Test and ANOVA (Post Hoc) analysis. The mean age of the participants was found 70.29 with SD= 4.582. The findings are shown in following table.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of participants (N= 197)

Participants characteristics	Demographic characteristics	N	%
Sex	Male	134	68.02
	Female	63	31.98
Marital status	Married	76	38.58
	Unmarried	08	4.06
	Widow	105	53.3
	Divorce	08	4.06
Educational Qualification	Primary	93	47.2
	Secondary	55	27.92
	Higher secondary	29	14.72
	Graduation	12	6.09
	Post-graduation	08	4.06
Social-economic status	Higher class	51	25.89
	Middle class	57	28.93
	Lower – middle class	56	28.43
	Lower class	33	16.75
Type of residence	With family	128	64.97
	Institute	60	30.46
	Single	09	4.56

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of 197 participants with their percentages where sex, marital status, educational qualification, socio-economic status, type of residence were taken into consideration.

Table 2: Mean (x) and Std. Deviation and t Test on Sex and Life Satisfaction of elderly aged people

Variable	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
Male	19.6	6.7	1.4	195	.075
Female	18.07	7.7			

Table 2 shows that the mean score of life satisfaction of male was found 19.6 which is greater than female 18.07. The Standard Deviation of male was found 6.7 and female 7.7. The result found no significant difference (t, df = 1.4, 195; p>0.05) in life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to sex. .

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation of marital status.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Married	21.13	6.27
Unmarried	15.87	7.14
Widow	18.18	7.43
Divorce	15.62	3.66

Table 3 shows the mean score of life satisfaction of elderly aged people which was found as 21.1316, 15.8750, 18.1810, 15.625 and Standard Deviation was found 6.27023, 7.14018, 7.43136, 3,66206 in married, unmarried, widow, divorced respectively.

Table 4: Summary of Post Hoc test (Tukey HSD) of life satisfaction of elderly aged people by marital status.

Tukey HSD Marital Status		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Married	unmarried	5.25	2.55	.172	-1.37	11.88
	widow	2.95*	1.03	.025	.26	5.63
	divorce	5.50	2.55	.141	-1.12	12.13
unmarried	married	-5.25	2.55	.172	-11.86	1.37
	widow	-2.30	2.52	.798	-8.84	4.23
	divorce	.2500	3.44	1.00	-8.66	9.16
Widow	married	-2.95*	1.03	.025	-5.63	-.26
	unmarried	2.30	2.52	.798	-4.23	8.84
	divorce	2.55	2.52	.742	-3.98	9.09
Divorce	married	-5.50	2.55	.141	-12.13	1.12
	unmarried	-.250	3.44	1.00	-9.16	8.66
	widow	-2.55	2.52	.742	-9.09	3.98

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

From table, it was observed that widow group is significantly different from the life satisfaction of married elder people (widow: M=18.18, SD=6.27; married: M=21.13; SD=6.27, F= 1.03; p>0.05) whereas widow group and divorced group have not any

significant difference from the unmarried group in life satisfaction. Similarly, divorced group do not differ significantly from the widow group in life satisfaction.

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to Educational Qualification

Variables	Means	Standard Deviation
Primary	19.10	7.05
Secondary	17.69	6.55
Higher Secondary	18.58	6.83
Graduation	21.41	5.29
Post-graduation	27.62	7.98

Table 5 shows the mean score of life satisfaction of elderly aged people which was found as 19.1075, 17.6909, 18.5862, 21.4167, 27.6250 and Standard Deviation was 7.05639, 6.55143,6.83749, 5.29937, 7.98100 in primary, secondary, Higher secondary, graduation, post-graduation respectively.

Table 6: Summary of Post Hoc test (Tukey HSD) of life satisfaction of elderly aged people by Educational Qualification

Education Qualification		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Primary	secondary	1.41	1.16	.740	-1.78	4.61
	Higher secondary	.52	1.45	.996	-3.48	4.52
	graduation	-2.30	2.09	.805	-8.08	3.46
	Post-graduation	-8.51*	2.51	.008	-15.44	-1.58
Secondary	primary	-1.41	1.16	.740	-4.61	1.78
	Higher secondary	-.89	1.5679	.979	-5.21	3.42
	graduation	-3.72	2.17	.429	-9.72	2.26
	Post-graduation	-9.93*	2.58	.002	-17.05	-2.81
Higher secondary	primary	-.52	1.45	.996	-4.52	3.48
	secondary	.89	1.56	.979	-3.42	5.21
	graduation	-2.83	2.34	.747	-9.2886	3.62
	Post-graduation	-9.03*	2.72	.010	-16.55	-1.52
Graduation	primary	2.30	2.09	.805	-3.46	8.08
	secondary	3.72	2.17	.429	-2.26	9.72
	Higher secondary	2.83	2.34	.747	-3.62	9.28
	Post-graduation	-6.20	3.11	.274	-14.79	2.37
Post-graduation	primary	8.51*	2.51	.008	1.58	15.44
	secondary	9.93*	2.58	.002	2.81	17.05
	Higher secondary	9.03*	2.72	.010	1.52	16.55
	graduation	6.20	3.11	.274	-2.37	14.79

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 6 shows that in case of life satisfaction, different education level: secondary, higher secondary and graduation have not any significant difference from primary education whereas post-graduation has significant difference from primary. Similarly, higher secondary and graduation have not found any significant difference from secondary but post-graduation has found significant difference from secondary level. Graduation does not differ from higher secondary significantly whereas post-graduation differ significantly from

higher secondary. Lastly, elderly aged people Post-graduation has no significant difference from graduation in case of their life satisfaction.

Table7: Mean (x) and Std. Deviation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people to Social-economic status.

Variables	Means	Standard Deviation
higher class	23.56	7.04
middle class	19.66	5.49
lower middle	16.41	6.38
lower class	15.90	6.92

Table 7 shows the mean score of life satisfaction of elderly aged people which was found as 23.5686, 19.6667, 16,4107,15.9091 and Standard Deviation was found 7.04345, 5.49134,6.38400, 6.92984 in higher class, middle class, lower middle and lower class respectively.

Table 8: Summary of Post Hoc test (Tukey HSD) of life satisfaction by Social-economic status

Socio economic status (I)	Socio economic status (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
higher class	middle class	3.90*	1.23	.010	.69	7.10
	lower middle	7.15*	1.24	.000	3.93	10.37
	lower class	7.65*	1.43	.000	3.94	11.37
middle class	higher class	-3.90*	1.23	.010	-7.10	-.696
	lower middle	3.25*	1.20	.038	.127	6.38
	lower class	3.75*	1.40	.040	.119	7.39
lower middle	higher class	-7.15*	1.24	.000	-10.37	-3.93
	middle class	-3.25*	1.20	.038	-6.38	-.12
	lower class	.5016	1.40	.984	-3.14	4.15
lower class	higher class	-7.65*	1.43	.000	-11.3	-3.94
	middle class	-3.75*	1.40	.040	-7.39	-.11
	lower middle	-.501	1.40	.984	-4.15	3.14

*.The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 8 shows, middle class, lower middle class, lower class have significant difference from higher class in life satisfaction. Similarly, life satisfaction of lower middle class and lower class has found significant difference from middle class. There is significant difference found between lower class and lower middle class of life satisfaction.

Table 9 Mean (x) and Std. Deviation of life satisfaction of elderly aged people to Type of residence.

Variables	Means	Standard Deviation
with family	20.96	6.34
Institute	15.78	7.36
Single	15.22	4.73

Table 9 shows the mean score of life satisfaction of elderly aged people which was found as 20.9609, 15.7833, 15.2222 and Standard Deviation was found 6.34370, 7.36020, and 4.73756in with family, institute and single respectively.

Table 10: Summary of Post Hoc test (Tukey HSD) of life satisfaction by Social-economic status

Type of residence(I)	Type of residence (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
with family	Institute	5.17[*]	1.03	.000	2.73	7.62
	Single	5.73[*]	2.28	.034	.351	11.12
Institute	with family	-5.17[*]	1.03	.000	-7.62	-2.73
	Single	.56	2.36	.969	-5.02	6.14
single	with family	-5.73[*]	2.28	.034	-11.12	-.35
	Institute	-.51	2.36	.969	-6.14	5.02

*.The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.Table 10 shows that elder age people who live in old home or in single have found significant difference of life satisfaction from the group with family but there is no significant difference found between single and institute, or family and single in life satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was mainly to see life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to their demographic variables. The specific objectives were i) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to sex, ii) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to marital status, iii) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to level of education, iv) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to socio-economic status, v) to see whether there is any differences of life satisfaction in relation to residence.

Table1 illustrates the demographic characteristics of 197 participants with their percentages where sex, marital status, educational qualification, socio-economic status, types of residence were taken into consideration. In Bangladesh, only 5% of the total populations are aged above 65 (*Bangladesh Bureau of statistics* 2015) Bangladesh Bureau of statistics 2015 The female participation in this study was relatively low as well. Moreover, the number of people agreed to participate in this study was very few. For these reasons the total number of participants and variations were found low.

Table 2 shows that there is no significant difference (t, df = 1.4, 195) at the alpha level of p>0.05 in life satisfaction of elderly aged people in relation to their sex. Moreover, the majority of studies find no sex differences in life satisfaction. These findings can be defined by considering the range of affect that men and women typically experience. The measures of depression and subjective well-being, which include affective components, appear to capture the extreme lows that leave women vulnerable to depression, as well as the extreme highs that allow for greater well-being. By contrast, men and women report similar rates of global life satisfaction, which is primarily a cognitive assessment (Worell, 2001).

From the table 4, we can see that the Widow group is significantly different from the married elderly aged people. The result of the study has coincided with the statement of (Fengler et al., 1982). Among elderly aged people it is observed that married persons are happier then widow, unmarried and divorced elderly aged people. Firstly married persons can share their opinions and views with their partner, secondly they can support each other during the time of crisis(Fengler et al., 1982). Moreover, widows are neglected in our society. Thus overall, the life satisfaction of the married persons is increased.

Table 6 shows that elderly aged people with post-graduation have significant difference from primary, secondary, higher secondary and graduation group. Education is one of the most important stabilizing factors of life satisfaction in retirement. It may be, the post graduated people have highest level of life satisfaction. Education assists in equipping older people with skills and resources which help them to adjust to changes in their socio-economic status occasioned by retirement. Most retirees who has assessed their health status as positive (excellence or good) are retirees with higher (tertiary) education whereas others with no formal education or primary education has rated their health status poorly (Amaike, 2014). The main reason is that the educated retirees will have adequate livelihood and report higher life satisfaction in retirement than retirees with less educational qualifications. In general, the statistics point to the pivotal role of education as a determinant of life satisfaction among older retirees.

Table 8 shows that middle class, lower middle class, lower class have significant difference from higher class. Similarly, lower middle class and lower class has significant difference from middle class. There is significant difference found between lower class and lower middle class. So, the persons with higher income have higher life satisfaction among elderly aged people. Elderly individuals with higher income have better social integration for having high quality of social ties and higher competence (both basic competences needed to maintain an independent life and expanded competence to fill the day with meaningful activities) reported greater life satisfaction, higher self-esteem, and greater happiness (Pinquart & Sörensen, 2000).

Table 10 shows the elder people who staying in family has higher life satisfaction than the person in old home or single. Due to lack of close family ties and reduced connections with their culture of origin elder people experience loneliness and depression (Singh & Misra, 2009). On the other hand, older people lose connection with their friendship networks and that they find it more difficult to initiate new friendships and to belong to new networks. The study conducted by Devi et al. (2015) establishes the fact that old home and non-old home elderly showed extremely statistically significant difference in satisfaction with life. Elderly populations residing with families were found to have very high satisfaction than the non-old home elderly in their study which is harmonious to this study. Elderly aged people staying with family can spend their time happily with their grandchild and get support physically, mentally, and economically. Moreover, they are most respected person among the family member.

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