

Comparative Study

A Comparative Study on Perceived Social Support and Pre-retirement Anxiety Among Middle Aged Working Professionals in Public Sector

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ABSTRACT

The study reviews the correlation between Perceived Social Support and Pre-retirement Anxiety among middle aged working professionals in public sector. The sample consisted of 120 middle aged working professionals in public sector nearing retirement out of which 60 were males and 60 were females by using convenience sampling method. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) and Pre-retirement Anxiety Scale was used for collection of data. Pearson's correlation and t-test was used to analyse result. The study found a negative correlation between Perceived Social Support and Pre-retirement Anxiety among middle aged working professionals in public sector. Additionally, study showed that there was no significant difference between Perceived Social Support and Pre-retirement Anxiety among male and female working professionals in public sector.

Keywords: *Pre-retirement Anxiety, Perceived Social Support*

Retirement is the cessation of one's job, occupation, or active working life. Retirement is a person's exit from the workforce, which is accompanied by a decline in psychological commitment to and behavioural disengagement from work, in line with the psychological viewpoint presented by Shultz & Wang (2011). We can emphasise retirement as a psychological process in conceptualization and a life status in empirical operationalization by using this description. This definition is also in line with the claim made by proponents (e.g., Levinson & Levinson 1996) of life-stage developmental theory that retirement is a life stage that not only entails a decline in physical activity and productivity but also a reduction in stress and day-to-day obligations to others. There are two perspectives on retiring from employment. On one hand, it gives people the time to do things like travel or pursue hobbies that they would not have the time to accomplish when they were employed. On the other hand, it interferes with one's everyday routine, lowers income, eliminates the identity and status supplied by the position of a worker, and presents the challenge of spending all that free time with worthwhile pursuits. Retirement has an impact on retirees' entire lives, not just their finances. In addition to the economy, retirees also deal with issues related to their health, diminished social status, loss of job responsibilities, lack of recognition, diminished self-esteem, loneliness, and disruption of

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habits. The psychological impact of the loss, which includes emotional stress, will have an impact on conduct, mental state, and social interactions (Hooyman & Kiyak, 1996).

Pre-retirement Anxiety

Pre-retirement anxiety is characterised by worries and anxieties about one's future as a result of ending one's active working life. Fear is included, which typically follows impending retirement. According to Ode (2004), some of the main sources/causes of pre-retirement anxiety are a lack of funds, difficulties managing one's mental health, difficulties adjusting to a new and a reduced social standing, inadequate retirement planning, difficulties managing one's time, total reliance on one's current salary, difficulties finding housing, not knowing what to do with pension money, the attitudes of friends and family, and the difficulties of a sudden retirement.

Perceived social support

The degree to which a person believes they can rely on others for help when they need it or are under stress is known as perceived social support. Dimatteo (2001) defined social support as any help or support received from others, including friends, family, neighbours, co-workers, and others. According to Kafetsios and Sideridis (2006), social support is defined as (i) the perceived qualitative functions carried out for the person by important others, such as emotional and practical support; and (b) the perceived quantitative structure of one's social ties, such as the quantity and frequency of contacts with friends and family, one's marital and parental status, and group affiliation.

Social Support and Retirement Anxiety

Anxieties about retirement may be reduced in numerous ways by social support. Social support can lessen anxiety by fostering a sense of stability and belonging. When people discover they have a strong support system, they may feel less anxious about their capacity to handle tough situations like retirement. The existence of such a network of supporters thereby eliminates the loneliness that may otherwise result from the loss of regular social encounters.

Offering emotional support may lower anxiety levels. An individual's need to make mental and emotional adjustments sometimes causes retirement anxiety. The adjustment to a new way of life and the loss of identity can be difficult for a person's mental and emotional equilibrium. By offering assistance that improves mental health and wellness, social support may be able to lessen these anxious sensations. Through this help, people can regain their emotional and mental equilibrium and comfortably adapt to the new way of life.

Vordzorgbe et al. (2018) did an investigation into teachers' pre-retirement anxiety in the Eastern area of Ghana. For the investigation, a descriptive survey design was chosen. All of the teachers in Ghana's Yilo-Krobo Municipality's Eastern Region who are scheduled to retire in the 2017 academic year made up the study's total population. 200 retirees were thought to be the study's target demographic. Seventy teachers who had enlisted in the Yilo-Krobo Municipality for retirement were chosen through simple random sampling. Data collection involved using a questionnaire. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. According to the study, inadequate retirement planning, trouble managing time, managing one's mental health, handling a new and lower social standing, and having insufficient savings are the main causes of pre-retirement worry. The survey found that the problems experienced by respondents were related to poor financial planning,

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retirement causing earlier death, retirement causing faster ageing, retirement causing loneliness, and retirement requiring assistance from friends. The investigation revealed that the Yilo-Krobo Municipality does not offer retirement counselling services. The study also found a link between social support and pre-retirement anxiety that was negative.

Sharma (2011) published a study to better understand the connections between retirees' subjective well-being, social support, religious affiliation, and personality toughness. 100 retired university lecturers from Himachal Pradesh were included in the sample (50 men and 50 women). According to the analysis, Purpose in Life (32%), Social Support (12%), and Religiosity (5%) have collectively contributed 49% of the variation for the entire group. Hardiness (27%) accounted the most variance in the sample of males, followed by Purpose in Life (14%), Social Support (8%) and Religion (4%). All told, these factors have explained 53% of the variance. Religiosity (32%) supplied the most variance to the sample of females, followed by social support (18%) and life purpose (8%). The findings indicate that three variables—social support, purpose in life, and religiosity are frequently used to predict the subjective well-being of people of both sexes.

METHODOLOGY

Aim was to assess the relationship between Perceived Social Support and Pre-retirement Anxiety in middle aged working professionals in public sector.

Sample

The sample consists of 120 individuals (Male- 60, Female- 60) and convenience sampling method was used for data collection. The sample consists of middle-aged working professionals in public sector who are about to retire in few years. Exclusion criteria is any other working professionals who are not about to retire in few years.

Instruments

Two measures were used in this study,

1. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), created by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, and Farley (1988), is the instrument that was used.

The MSPSS has 12 items spread across three subscales that assess how much people in society believe their family, friends, and significant others to be supporting them.

Each subscale's reliability coefficient was determined, as well as the scale's overall reliability coefficient. Significant Other, Family, and Friends subscale values for the entire sample were 0.88, 0.91, 0.87, and 0.85, respectively.

2. Pre-retirement Anxiety Scale (PAS)

To gauge a worker's level of worry prior to retirement, Odunayo Tunde Arogundade created and standardised the Pre-Retirement anxiety Scale (PAS) in 2014.

The scale 30-item with five-point Likert scale response format ranges from Agree strongly (5), agree moderately (4), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree moderately (2) and disagree strongly (1). The participant will be informed to respond, understanding that there is no right or wrong option. They will be asked to reflect how each statements describes their attitude or feeling as they really are and not as they would like to be.

Cronbach Alpha Internal consistency (.77), Guttman Split-half reliability (.73), and Spearman Brown reliability (.74) were used to demonstrate dependability, demonstrating that PAS has a high and substantial level of internal consistency.

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Three variables were identified by factor analysis using Principal Component Analysis. Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett test of Sphericity were done to assess the validity of the study. Both tests produced results of .69 and approximate Chi-Square (5789.39, df=435, P<0.05) respectively.

Procedure

By delivering the questionnaire to the intended population, the data were gathered offline. All instructions that participants were required to follow to respond to the statements were included in the questionnaire. Participants received assurances that the information would be kept in strict confidence and used only for research. Additionally, permission was sought from the participants. It was advised to the participants to take their time and give truthful responses. Participants were asked to contact in case of any queries or additional questions and were provided with an email address for the same. Advanced statistical techniques were used to analyse the collected data. The statistical programme SPSS was used to input and save the data gathered from the survey questions. The collected data was then subjected to statistical tests using SPSS.

RESULTS

Table No. 1 Group Statistics of Perceived Social Support and Pre-retirement Anxiety among Male and Female Working Professionals in Public Sector

Group Statistics						
	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
MSPSS TOTAL SCORE	Male	60	64.20	14.468	1.868	
	Female	60	69.67	9.533	1.231	
PAS TOTAL SCORE	Male	60	78.58	18.029	2.327	
	Female	60	73.57	18.476	2.385	

- The mean scores of perceived social support among male and female working professionals in public sector are 64.2 and 69.67 respectively.
- The mean scores of pre-retirement anxiety among male and female working professionals in public sector are 78.58 and 73.57 respectively.
- The standard deviation scores of perceived social support among male and female working professionals in public sector are 14.468 and 9.533 respectively.
- The standard deviation scores of pre-retirement anxiety among male and female working professionals in public sector are 18.029 and 18.476 respectively.

Table No. 2 Correlation of Perceived Social Support among Working Professionals in Public Sector.

Correlations			
		MSPSS TOTAL SCORE	PAS TOTAL SCORE
MSPSS TOTAL SCORE	Pearson Correlation	1	-.247**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
	N	120	120
PAS TOTAL SCORE	Pearson Correlation	-.247**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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A strong inverse or negative relationship between Pre-retirement Anxiety and Perceived Social Support is seen. Using Pearson correlation approach these findings were discovered ($r = .247^{**}$, $p < 0.01$).

Table No. 3 Independent Sample T-test displaying no difference in Perceived Social Support and Pre-retirement Anxiety among Male and Female Working Professionals in Public Sector.

Variable	Male		Female		t	P	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Perceived Social Support	64.20	14.468	68.67	9.533	-2.444	0.147	12.251
Pre-retirement Anxiety	78.58	18.029	73.57	18.476	1.505	0.929	18.254

Note. P value > 0.05 is considered significant.

There is no significant difference in Perceived Social Support among male and female working professionals in public sector ($t = -2.444$, $p < 0.05$, $d = -.446$).

There is no significant difference in Pre-retirement Anxiety among male and female working professionals in public sector ($t = 1.505$, $p < 0.05$, $d = .275$).

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to see if there is any correlation between Perceived Social Support and Pre-retirement Anxiety in middle aged working professionals in public sector. For this purpose, a sample of 120 working professionals in middle age working in public sector who will retire in few years were taken with their full consent, to participate in this study. The study found that there is negative correlation between perceived social support and pre-retirement anxiety among middle aged working professionals in public sector. Which means that greater levels of perceived social support will decrease pre-retirement anxiety. This result is supported by research conducted by Vordzorgbe et al., (2018) in which a study was conducted to investigate pre-retirement anxiety among teachers in Ghana. The results revealed that there was a negative correlation between social support and pre-retirement anxiety. Another study by Kuncoro and Sari (2006) also proved the significant negative correlation between social support and the anxiety in facing retirement. However, there was no significant difference between perceived social support and pre-retirement anxiety among male and female working professionals in public sector. This was contrary to the findings of the study conducted by Arogundade (2014) which revealed that female workers reported significantly lower pre-retirement anxiety than their male counterparts. Overall, the study suggest that perceived social support has significant influence on pre-retirement anxiety experienced by middle aged working professionals in public sector. High levels of perceived social support can decrease pre-retirement anxiety experience by individuals nearing retirement.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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