

## Life Satisfaction among Institutionalized and Non-Institutionalized Elderly People

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### ABSTRACT

The study aimed to investigate the level of life satisfaction among institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly people. The present study was done on 160 elderly people (80 males and 80 females). Data were collected from different old age homes and elderly persons living with their family from Moradabad and Bareilly district. Hindi version of life satisfaction scale developed by Dr. Q.G Alam and Dr. Ramji Srivastava was used. Analysis was done using t-test to compare the two groups. Results suggested a significant difference between institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly with regard to health and economic dimensions of life satisfaction. Findings revealed a low mean score of non-institutionalized elderly in comparison to institutionalized elderly with regard to health dimension, but a significantly high mean score on economic dimension. It can be concluded that institutionalized elderly showed more life satisfaction in health dimension. As far as economic is concerned non-institutionalized elderly people living with their family reflected more life satisfaction.

**Keywords:** *Life satisfaction, Institutionalized, Non-institutionalized, Elderly*

Life satisfaction is a feeling of happiness and contentment with one's life. It means being blessed with what you have and feeling that life is good, even if it's not perfect. Many people believe that life satisfaction does not come from what we own or achieve but from how we feel about ourselves and the world around us. Famous psychologists have studied life satisfaction and shared valuable ideas about it. According to Carl Rogers (1961) "The good life is a process, not a state of being. It is a direction, not a destination." This means that life satisfaction comes from the journey and growth rather than reaching a certain point. Martin Seligman (2011) introduced the idea of "flourishing" "or living a life filled with purpose, relationships, and accomplishment." He also stated that satisfaction comes from living our life filled with positive emotions, engagement in what we love, and strong social connection. Seligman (2011) stated that happiness is not just about pleasure but about meaning and connection. In simple words, life satisfaction is about appreciating the journey, growing as a person and finding meaning in our relationships and experience. As these psychologists suggest, true happiness comes from within, not from things outside. The overall appreciation of one's life as a whole, with minor fluctuations over time, but generally stable in the long run (Sameer et al., 2023).

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Ageing is a universal and unavoidable process that affects older persons' quality of life (QoL) through biological, psychological, social, and economic changes. Access to healthcare, family support, cultural background, socioeconomic circumstances, and health status are just a few of the many variables that affect the general well-being and life satisfaction of older adults (Prakash et al., 2019). Understanding and enhancing the quality of life (QoL) of older adults, both in institutionalized (old age homes) and non-institutionalized (living with family) settings, is becoming more and more important as life expectancy rises.

### *Objective*

- To Assess difference with regard to life satisfaction in terms of its six dimensions (Health, Personal, Economic, Marital, Social, & Job) between Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized elderly people.

### *Hypotheses*

There will be a significant difference between institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly people with regard to their life satisfaction in terms of

1. Health Satisfaction
2. Personal Satisfaction
3. Economic Satisfaction
4. Marital Satisfaction
5. Social Satisfaction
6. Job Satisfaction

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Sample*

Present study was conducted on 160 elderly people, aged between 60-65 from Bareilly and Moradabad district. The sample was divided into institutionalized and non-institutionalized. In each group there were 80 elderly participants (40 males and 40 females).

### *Tools used:*

- **Life satisfaction scale (Hindi version)** - The scale was developed by Alam & Srivastava (2001). There were 60 items in this full inventory related to different aspects of life viz. Health, Personal, Economic, Marital, Social and Job. The Test-retest reliability was .84. The correlation coefficient of the scale with Saxena's adjustment inventory was found to be 0.74 and .84.

### *Procedure*

Consent was obtained from the participants. Participants were enthusiastic to participate in the study. After rapport formation with the individuals, scale was distributed and instructions were given. The researcher was attentive in clarifying any doubts. After completion of the test, researcher collected the scale and thanked to the participants.

### *Research Design and Statistical Analysis-*

A comparative study was done to compare institutionalized and non-institutionalized with regard to their life satisfaction using t- test for statistical analysis.

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**Table No.1: Difference between Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized elderly people with regard to the Health Dimension**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Institutionalized	80	10.3	3.26	2.15*	Significant p=0.05
Non-institutionalized	80	9.22	2.89		

**Table No.2: Difference between Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized elderly people with regard to Personal Dimension**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Institutionalized	80	11.0	2.61	0.83	NS
Non-institutionalized	80	11.4	3.24		

**Table No.3: Difference between Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized elderly people with regard to Economic Dimension**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Institutionalized	80	10.2	3.57	2.27*	Significant 0.05
Non-institutionalized	80	11.4	3.24		

**Table No.4: Difference between Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized elderly people with regard to Marital Dimension**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Institutionalized	80	10.8	3.19	0.51	NS
Non-institutionalized	80	11.0	2.71		

**Table No.5: Difference between Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized elderly people with regard to Social Dimension**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Institutionalized	80	9.59	2.52	1.50	NS
Non-institutionalized	80	8.93	3.05		

**Table No.6: Difference between Institutionalized and Non-institutionalized elderly people with regard to Job Dimension**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Institutionalized	80	10.2	3.57	1.21	NS
Non-institutionalized	80	9.46	3.67		

The primary goal of this study was to assess life satisfaction among elderly individuals living in institutionalized settings (old age homes) and non-institutionalized settings (living with their families). Life satisfaction was evaluated across six key dimensions: health, economic, personal, social, marital, and job. The findings revealed some insightful differences between the two groups in terms of life satisfaction, but also highlighted areas where no significant differences were found.

The health dimension showed a significant difference between the two groups, with institutionalized elderly individuals reporting higher life satisfaction. The mean scores is (10.3 and 9.22 respectively) this may seem counter-intuitive at first, as one might assume that those living at home would be more content with their health. However, institutionalized elderly individuals often receive more regular medical attention and have

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easier access to healthcare services, which could contribute to their greater satisfaction with health. On the other hand, non-institutionalized elderly individuals may have limited access to healthcare, especially in big family settings, or may rely on family members for care, which may not be as timely or effective. This highlights the importance of healthcare accessibility in enhancing the quality of life for elderly individuals, regardless of their living situation. The economic dimension revealed a significant difference, with non-institutionalized elderly individuals showing higher life satisfaction. The Mean scores is (10.2 and 11.4 respectively) elderly individuals living with their families are more likely to benefit from financial support, either from their children or other family members. Additionally, the larger family size, even in nuclear families, typically provides a higher collective income, further contributing to their economic satisfaction. In contrast, institutionalized elderly individuals may face more limited financial resources, as many institutions charge fees for accommodation and services. This finding underlines the importance of financial stability and family support in improving life satisfaction, particularly in the economic dimension. Whereas, institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly people were not significantly differ on other dimensions of life satisfactions (Personal, Marital, Social and Job dimensions respectively). According to a comparative research by Sapthagiri., et al. (2024) confirms broader trends seen in the literature, where non-institutionalized elderly report better quality of life due to stronger socialites, greater independence and environmental familiarity, the review suggest a need for improving condition in institutional setting addressing factors like social isolation, autonomy and access to care enhance the well-being of institutionalized elderly peoples.

Present study is a step forward to understand the life satisfaction on different dimensions among institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly people, at the same time it has some limitations. Life satisfaction is subjective and can be influence by individual differences in personality and personal value, as it was conducted only on elderly people which cannot be generalized for adolescents and adult population. Further, only effect on life satisfaction among institutionalized and non-institutionalized explored. Attempt could be made to study well-being, resilience, cognitive abilities, self- esteem and personality factors in future studies.

### CONCLUSION

On the basis of the results of the study, it can be concluded that significant differences were found between institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly with regard to their level of life satisfaction. Institutionalized elderly experience more health satisfaction and non-institutionalized elderly experience more economic satisfaction. No significant differences were found on other dimensions (Personal, Social, Marital & Job) of life satisfaction.

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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