

Research Article

Perceived Life Satisfaction of Muslim Aged Men and Women: A Study with Special Reference to New Delhi

Hena Gauhar^{1*} and Prof. Anis Ahmad²

¹PhD Scholar, University Department of Psychology, L. N. Mithila University, Darbhanga – 846004, India

²University Department of Psychology, L. N. Mithila University, Darbhanga – 846 004, India

*Corresponding Author

Hena Gauhar

Abstract: Life satisfaction as cognitive process by which an individual assesses his/her progress towards desired goals. Various researches on the phenomenon have been carried out in relation to different psycho – social aspects but researchers have not paid attention on Muslim aged men and women with particular reference to New Delhi. Thus, the present study was planned to study on such problem. For the present study, on one hundred eighty (N=180) aged comprising men (n=90) and women (n=90) were randomly selected. All subjects included in the sample were contacted personally from different area of locality of New Delhi. Major areas of New Delhi were given priority for the present piece of research work namely, Okhla, Zakir Nagar, Batla house, Shaheen Bagh, Ghafoor Nagar, Abul Fazal Enclave, and Malviya Nagar. All subjects' age were recorded near about 60 and above 60 years. Data were collected through questionnaire schedules then thereafter individual scores were summed up according to its procedure for giving statistical treatment. Results revealed the clear cut picture regarding the problems that perceived life satisfaction for both the group of Muslim aged men and women. It is important to note that significance of difference has also been found in terms of their perceived life satisfaction between the group of Muslim aged men and women, although, both the group have shown favorable inclination towards the degree of perceived reactions of life satisfaction. Moreover, results also revealed the fact that Muslim aged men were found more prone to the degree of their perceived life satisfaction than their female counterpart especially from where the sample has been drawn to undertake the present piece of research work. Finally, the discrepancy of obtained results has been discussed in the light of exigency of situations prevailing in New Delhi.

Keywords: Life Satisfaction, Aged, Muslim, Men, Women, New Delhi.

INTRODUCTION:

In this modern age stress is a common aspect which everyone experience either young or old and because of this reason, the present age is considered to be the era of stress. Stress is something if it increases beyond tolerance limit is likely to deteriorate the performance as well as normal functioning of even routine work. Because of this reason contrary to it people always seek satisfaction to avoid pain. Here, it is imperative to mention that our behavior is the function of Greek mythological philosophy of hedonism which carries the meaning that behavior is directed towards pleasure and away from pain. This is the crust of human behavior which is reflected even in the Freudian approach to human behavior. However, it is necessary to point out that human being seek pleasure and avoid pain.

Similarly, aging is a natural process which carries with it a lot of stresses but to avoid it every one makes effort to seek satisfaction. Satisfaction has always been an important aspect of one's life.

Present changing scenario of society conveys itself about human motivational spheres of life. It is because of the fact that motivational aspects of life especially in this fast pace of development where every one seeks to have some extent of social and emotional support from the family to maintain his/her life satisfaction irrespective of age, religion, gender, caste - class, family type, area of residence, etc.

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In view of the above assertion, the present study is aimed to investigate the perceived life satisfaction among Muslim aged men and women with particular reference to New Delhi.

The terms life satisfaction, morale and happiness are often used interchangeably referring to psychological wellbeing of the individual. George (1981) defined life satisfaction as cognitive process by which an individual assesses his/her progress towards desired goals. George also defined happiness as transitory moods of gaiety reflecting the affect that people feel toward their current state of life affairs". Finally she defined morale as a fit between the individual and the environment, the acceptance of those aspects of life that cannot be changed and more generally, how positive one's outlook on life is. In addition, it is often observed that motivational spheres of life contribute a lot to getting individual's life satisfaction which provides all round capacity with commitment of family and work too. In an important study Palmore and Kivelt (1977) asserted their views that the best predictor of life satisfaction is the person's ratings of life satisfaction in the past and that initial values or changes in other variables appeared to be unrelated to changes in life satisfaction, although, Taves and Hansen (1962) and Medley (1976) gave a model depicting a causative chain between financial situations, health satisfaction with life as a whole. Satisfaction with family was found to make the greatest impact on life satisfaction, although, Harris (1975) presented both positive and negative statements on life satisfaction. The vast majority found that their past lives were satisfying; they had gotten what they expected out of life. The larger difference was in terms of future. The aged both men and women were much less likely to have made plans for the future or to expect interesting and pleasant things to happen in the future. Various studies have been conducted to the factors leading to satisfaction with life as Neugarten, Havighurst and Tobin (1961) stated that resolution and fortitude, congruence between desired and achieved goals, positive self concept and mood constitute the psychological concept of life satisfaction, whereas Pookraj (1972) used life satisfaction indices to assess life satisfaction in relation to the degree of engagement - disengagement of the elderly and he found that disengagement does not necessarily manifest in a lower level of moral for the aged An important study conducted by Liang (1982) who studied sex difference in the life satisfaction among the elderly and found that socioeconomic status has positive effect on health. In this study, financial satisfaction assumed to be positively influenced by socio economic status and health. Many researchers have studied life satisfaction in different ways. When a person is dissatisfied with life, it means that he/she is experiencing negative emotions that are coloring his/her view of the world. There may also be relative lack of positive feelings as

stated. Such dissatisfaction means important needs and expectations are not being met (Lawton, 1983).

A lot of researches on life satisfaction have been conducted so far and viewed that happiness in old age depends to a great extent upon busy life, good health, absence of the feeling of paucity of funds and having spouse and social context which is witnessed from Anantharaman's (1979) study that has been investigated interrelations among adjustment - related factors in old age. In this study a positive correlation between activity and adjustment was found. He further explained that adjustment is to be positively related to education, occupation, income and social class. Self-rated physical/mental health and adjustment in life was also found positively related. Thus, life satisfaction among the aged is a function of several interrelated factors of adjustment.

Recently, Ahmad and Ahmad (2009) studied perceived life satisfaction of the aged university employees and found significance of difference between working employees and retired employees. It is very interesting to note that in their study both the group of employees have indicated favorable inclination towards their life satisfaction but working elderly employees were found more prone to life satisfaction than their colleagues who have retired from their job. Numerous models and approaches to life satisfaction are readily available in the review of research and development but they did not support Indian culture especially to Indian Muslim culture. Hence, the present piece of research work is aimed to study perceived life satisfaction among aged with special reference to Muslims living in New Delhi.

Significance of the Study

So far as the review of research and development is concerned, it is important to be mentioned here that aging is still a matter of discussion and it is because of the fact that rapid changing environment have modified our life style, hence, it must be carried out in relation to different dimensions of human life. Finally, it is to be pointed out that the result of this study could be utilized for understanding the cause of the problems of aging so far as the life satisfaction is concerned. For any psychologist or psychiatrist the results of the study can help in deciding the line of intervention strategies. Family members, doctors, academicians, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, the society and NGOs as such can be of great help in supporting and creating congenial environment among the elderly people by understanding the various psychosocial factors which could precipitate the problems of aged.

Having surveyed the literature available on the proposed research problem, it has been observed that there are basically two approaches to life satisfaction. The first focuses the individual and uses social criteria

of successful life. The second approach is to be viewed from an individual's internal frame i.e. the individual's own interpretation and evaluation of his present and past life, and his satisfaction or his happiness. Thus, the present investigation is aimed to study the perceived Life Satisfaction of Muslim aged Men and Women with particular reference to New Delhi. It is indeed that most of the cultures in the developing world, Indian culture can also be considered as a male dominated one. Despite its long and hoary tradition of treating its women folk with special care and respect, at present, the status of women in Indian is not much different from that in other cultures. Aging as a product of biology, in part, and to great extent socialization practices perhaps women tend to be different psychologically than men. They are more sensitive than men to social interaction develop closer and more extensive social networks and are more giving in those relationships. Because of this greater sensitivity and emotionality, it seems that women are more likely to seek help than men and feel more frustrated than men when it is not available adequately. Therefore, it has also been decided that equal number of men will also be selected for comparison. Hence, the present study on aging is still recurrent issue to be discussed due to the impact of economic globalization. Moreover, study may help in creating healthy environment within the Indian socio cultural milieu and finally, the present study will also suggest proper directions to protect the aged at globe.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present research work is aimed at studying the perceived life satisfaction of Muslim aged men and women with particular reference to New Delhi which needs special attention to be investigated. Thus, the present study was aimed at studying the perceived life satisfaction of among Muslim aged with reference to New Delhi. It is also important to mention here that the present study was mainly focus on Muslim families living in New Delhi. Thus, the present finding of the research work will help to understand the behaviour of the Muslim families and it will fill the void of knowledge in the area of gerontology; hence, the present research work is of immense value.

HYPOTHESES

On The Basis Of Broad Objective Of The Present Research Endeavor, The Following Hypotheses Were Formulated.

1. Muslim aged women living in New Delhi will score high on the items of the life satisfaction scale than Muslim aged men living in New Delhi.
2. There will be no significance of difference between the group of Muslim aged men and Muslim aged women living in New Delhi in terms of their degree of perceived life satisfaction.
3. Muslim aged women living in New Delhi will have higher degree of perceived life satisfaction than

Muslim aged men living in New Delhi comparatively.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample

The present study was carried on one hundred eighty (N=180) aged comprising men (n=90) and women (n=90). All the subjects included in the sample were contacted personally from different area of locality of New Delhi. Major areas of New Delhi were given priority for the present piece of research work namely, Okhla, Zakir Nagar, Batla house, Shaheen Bagh, Ghafoor Nagar, Abul Fazal Enclave, and Malviya Nagar. All subjects' age were recorded near about 60 and above 60 years.

MATERIALS AND TOOLS

The Following Tools Are Likely To Be Used In The Present Proposed Research Work.

- **Life Satisfaction Scale:**

For measuring life satisfaction of aged, a scale developed by Chadha, N. K. & Van Willigen, J. (1995) was used. The scale consisted of 27 items based on Likert type 7-point scale in which 12 items are scored in reverse order i.e. 7 to 1 (for strongly disagree to strongly agree). In this scale higher score indicates high life satisfaction. This scale has been standardized by the author on Indian population and it has the split-half reliability of 0.87 and also has the face content and predictive validity of 0.82 which confirms the efficacy of the scale.

- **Biographical Information Blank:**

For interpreting the obtained results, a biographical information blank (BIB) was also prepared. It includes qualifications, age, marital status, religion, sex, number of dependents, experience in the present position, income, etc.

Procedure

The above mentioned test material along with Biographical Information Blank (BIB) was administered in printed form individually on all aged men and women from different localities New Delhi – a capital of India. After collecting the data on each item of the above mentioned scales, individual scores were summed up according to the norms and procedure of the scale. Thereafter the obtained individual scores were given statistical treatment. Finally the obtained results were presented in the tables and discussed logically to draw the conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In quest of presenting the obtained results in terms of perceived reactions on life satisfaction, table-1 of the results reveal the clear cut picture concerning the significance of difference between the group of Muslim aged men and women living in New Delhi as t- value 2.45 has been found statistically significant at 0.05 level of confidence. Hence the proposed hypothesis i.e. there

will be no significance of difference between the group of Muslim aged men and women in terms of their

degree of life satisfaction stands rejected. The obtained results can be observed from the table – 1 given below:

Table-1 Showing Significance of Difference in the Extent of Perceived Life Satisfaction of Aged Muslim Men and Women of New Delhi

SAMPLE GROUP	Total Sample (N=180)	Mean	SD	t- value	Significance Level
AGED MEN	n=90	156.67	28.73	2.45	0.05
AGED WOMEN	n=90	146.23	27.85		

Extending table -1 of the results, table-2 highlights the percentages of Muslim aged men and women’s perceived reactions towards life satisfaction. It is witnessed from the table - 2 that 64.44 percent of the aged men have higher degree of life satisfaction in comparison to aged women who reported only 52.22

percent. While 28.89 percent of aged men have moderate level of perceived reactions to life satisfaction, 35.56 percent of aged women have shown moderate level of life satisfaction which is comparatively high when compared to aged men i.e. 28.89 percent.

Table-2 Showing Comparative Levels of Perceived Reactions on Life Satisfaction between Muslim Aged Men and Muslim Women of New Delhi

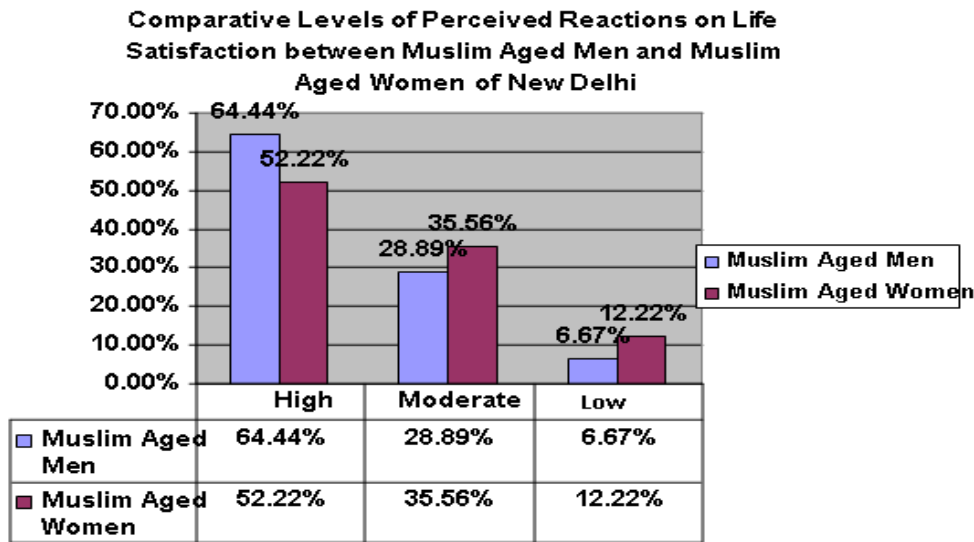
Levels	Men		Women	
	N=90	Percentage	n=90	Percentage
High	58	64.44%	47	52.22%
Moderate	26	28.89%	32	35.56%
Low	06	06.67%	11	12.22%

Mean = 156.67

Mean = 146.23

Moreover, 6.67 percent of aged men indicated low level of life satisfaction in comparison to aged women i.e. 12.22 percent which is relatively higher than men as it can be observed from the table – 2. Obtained

results pertaining to comparative levels of perceived reactions on life satisfaction between Muslim aged men and Muslim women living in New Delhi – a capital India can also be observed by the following diagram.



In the light of the results obtained, it is important to point out that all the elderly living in New have shown quite favorable inclination towards their degree of perceived life satisfaction. This is evident from the fact that they scored above average on the life satisfaction scale, although, aged men scored higher in comparison to aged women as their mean value are in table – 1 and beneath of the table – 2.. The presented results seem to be quite logical as socio-cultural milieu of whole New Delhi is traditional especially Muslim families where our elderly are getting life protection

from their family members and they do not believe in modernization. Thus, all the elderly have shown favorable satisfaction towards his/her life. During the investigation, present investigators also experienced that their children are very much supportive and they care of their elderly in all respect. Their children are educated and involved in different jobs and most of them are self-employed. It may be the cause to have favorable degree of life satisfaction for both the group of men and women.

Apart from the above discussion, it is pertinent to be mentioned here that aged women have comparatively shown low life satisfaction than men. Basically they want their children always be with her so we can say that aged women always suffer from temperamental poverty especially from where the present sample has been drawn and moreover lack of family members support as well but instead of these aged women also scored above higher degree on the life satisfaction score. Really they deserve a lot of credit in her whole life endeavor. The results presented here seem to be logical in the sense that male are always realistic and female are not. Aged women are away from naturalism because mirror reflexion is not there and it is due to isolation.

Before terminating the discussion it is important to stress light on some of the observations experienced by the present researchers that during the period of aging people suffer from increasing social losses or social disengagement. One type of social disengagement is less involvement with other people. This may be due to several reasons such as transfer of friends and acquaintances, deaths, moving in to a new place after retirement, as well as an increased interest in oneself. All these results in narrowing of social contacts, which is further narrowed due to decreased physical abilities and lack of transportation facilities. Their own family members are busy in pursuits of their own and have little time to spend with them which further increases the feeling of isolation in the aged living alone. It is undoubtedly fact that old age is a period when one is likely to feel useless and uncared for. This feeling of rejection and isolation is likely to increase further when the decision to live alone is not a matter of choice but enforced due to circumstances but in the present piece of research endeavor, it has not been found especially in Muslim families in India. Furthermore, life satisfaction is now getting its deeper concern with some important positive characteristics of the Muslim aged men and women such as flexibility and inner sense of unity, the ability to make relationship to attach to others and to love the ability to think clearly including emotional matters, the ability to manage the emotions successfully and appropriately, and the capacity to have an accurate self-concept and high self-esteem thus in the recent past the field of global mental health followed by life satisfaction have emerged and define as the area of study, research and practice that places a priority for improving mental health for all people worldwide.

CONCLUSIONS

On The Basis Of The Obtained Results And Its Interpretations The Conclusions Are Summed Up Below:

1. Muslim aged men and women in New Delhi where from the sample has been drawn have indicated

favorable inclination toward the degree of perceived life satisfaction.

2. Significance of difference has been found between Muslim aged women and men in terms of their perceived life satisfaction.
3. Muslim aged men were found comparatively more prone to higher degree of perceived life satisfaction than their counterparts i.e. Muslim aged women.
4. Observations have revealed the fact that all the people who live in New Delhi – a capital of India from where the present sample has been drawn for the present piece of research endeavor has unique and traditional life cycle especially Muslim families, thus everyone in that socio-cultural milieu have high social values and work ethics and greater sense of responsibility with whom they have their social and family affiliations. Instead of these there is a need to pay much more attention to the necessities of the aged men especially aged women for maintaining sound mental health and healthy life satisfaction.

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