

## Life Satisfaction among Senior Citizens in a Community of Kathmandu, Nepal

Shrestha MK<sup>1</sup>, Adhikari RD<sup>2\*</sup>, Ranjitkar UD<sup>1</sup> and Chand A<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>TU Institute of Medicine, Maharajgunj Nursing Campus, Nepal

<sup>2</sup>Department of Nursing, Central South University, Xiangya School of Nursing, Changsha Hunan, P.R. China

\*Corresponding author: Adhikari RD, Master's in Nursing, Central South University, Xiangya School of Nursing, Changsha Hunan, P.R. China, Tel: +8613755090969; E-mail: rajdevi\_adhikari@yahoo.com

Received: March 07, 2019; Accepted: March 18, 2019; Published: March 25, 2019

Copyright: © 2019 Adhikari RD, et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the creative commons attribution license, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

### Abstract

**Introduction:** Life satisfaction in senior citizens has been used as an indicator to evaluate senior citizens life conditions, reflecting multiple and broad domains. The objective of this study is to find out the level of life satisfaction among senior citizens in a community of Kathmandu.

**Methodology:** A descriptive cross-sectional research design was used for conducting this research study among 150 senior citizens residing in Tarakeshwor Municipality of Kathmandu District over a period of 4 weeks from 2nd July to 28th July 2017 through non-probability purposive sampling technique. Life Satisfaction among senior citizens was assessed by semi structured interview. Data was analyzed by using SPSS 16. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics: chi square test was used.

**Results and Discussion:** The results of this study showed that most (82.7%) of the senior citizens were satisfied with overall satisfaction level. There was significant association between overall life satisfaction and good economic status, ownership of property ( $p=0.019$ ) and having good family income ( $p=0.001$ ) and having sufficient financial support ( $p=0.004$ ).

**Conclusion:** This study concluded that most of the senior citizens were satisfied with their life and only few senior citizens were dissatisfied. Hence, this study suggested that efforts should be directed towards enhancement of life satisfaction of senior citizens through providing sufficient financial support, having good family income, and having ownership in property.

**Keywords:** Senior citizens; Life satisfaction; Community

### Introduction

Life satisfaction among the elderly has become an important issue in geriatric care. Life satisfaction amongst the elderly is still rated highly despite growing discomfort. A study on maintaining life satisfaction at old age in the face of physical decline carried out in Netherlands by Puvill [1] showed that older people were more satisfied with their lives than is often believed, even when they experienced health issues. Change in life styles, demanding jobs, a shift to nuclear family structures have led to increased neglect of the elderly by families and community [2]. Having more education and better physical and psychological health, social support, and economic satisfaction were predictors of a higher life satisfaction trajectory and maintaining good physical and emotional health, having a spouse, and having better economic satisfaction were associated with an increase in life satisfaction over time [3].

A comparative study was done in India on life satisfaction of elderly in families and old age homes showed that 90.2% and 62.7% of the elderly were satisfied with life among those living in families and old age home respectively. Similarly, 03.9% in each group were very satisfied with their life where as 33.3% of them living in old age homes

are dissatisfied with life and only 5.9% of them living in families were dissatisfied [4].

A descriptive cross-sectional study done in Kangwha, South Korea on life satisfaction and mortality in elderly people showed that 34% of the senior citizens stated adequately satisfied in their lives, 38% stated averagely satisfied and 27% stated poorly satisfied [5]. Another study done in Malaysia showed that 59% had an average life satisfaction, 30.5% had below average life satisfaction and 8.5% had dissatisfaction with their life [6].

### Research Methodology

Descriptive cross-sectional research design was used. Tarakeshwor Municipality was selected purposively. Three areas were selected randomly among seven areas of this municipality by lottery method for collecting data. Sample size was 150. Non-probability, purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample of the study. Data was collected by semi Structured face to face interview. Interview questionnaire was consisted of three parts.

### Part I: Questionnaire

This portion include questionnaire related to socio-demographic variables, such as age, sex, marital status, occupation, economic status etc.

## Part II: Satisfaction level among senior citizens

This portion includes present satisfaction level among senior citizens. Satisfaction related to living condition, present health status, basic activities like feeding, bathing, dressing, transferring, continence and intermediate activities like shopping, walking, doing simple household activities were asked. Also, satisfaction related to relationship with family member like satisfaction with spouse, children, grandchildren, satisfaction with communication, friends, and relatives. Comparing with own aged person, satisfaction with social activities, religious activities and economic status was assessed.

## Part III: Overall satisfaction of senior citizens

This part includes overall satisfaction of senior citizens. This portion includes overall satisfaction in 11 items with 5 responses. These items were modified form of Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) by Diener et al. [7], in which ranges from extremely disagree to extremely agree. Level of satisfaction was leveled as 11-32 = dissatisfied and 33-55 = leveled as satisfied.

The content validity of the instrument was established by consulting with research advisor, geriatric experts and head of department of research. Instrument was written in English language then was translated into Nepali language and back translated into English version. Pretesting of the instrument was done among 15 senior citizens residing in Tokha Municipality. Some necessary changes were done in questionnaire after pretesting. During data collection privacy

was maintained by taking interview in separate room and corners of the home setting. Confidentiality was maintained by using code number in each form and also respondents were assured that the information they provide would be used for the research purpose only.

Collected data was then edited, classified, coded and entered into Microsoft Excel. Thereafter, coded data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 16. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and range) as well as inferential statistics (chi-square test) were used to determine the association of selected socio-demographic characteristics and overall life satisfaction of the senior citizens.

## Results

### Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

The finding of this study shows that more than half (58%) of respondents were age of 60-70 years with the mean age and standard deviation of  $70.14 \pm 7.95$ . More than half (54%) of them were male and 59.3% of them were from upper cast group. Similarly, almost all (95.3%) of them were Hinduism, 56.7% were unable read and write, 64% were married status and 76% lived in joint family. Likewise, 58% of the respondents had role as head of the family, 47.3% were involved in income generating occupation, 64% had enough income for a year and 71.3% had ownership of property.

Variables	Present Level of Satisfaction				
	Very Dissatisfied [n (%)]	Not Satisfied [n (%)]	Neutral [n (%)]	Satisfied [n (%)]	Very Satisfied [n (%)]
Living condition	3 (2.0)	15 (10.0)	10 (6.7)	101 (67.3)	21 (14.0)
Health status	2 (1.3)	32 (21.3)	7 (4.7)	97 (64.7)	12 (8.0)
Basic activities	2 (1.3)	12 (8.0)	5 (3.3)	119 (79.3)	12 (8.0)
Intermediate activities	1 (0.7)	20 (13.3)	7 (4.7)	111 (74.0)	11 (7.3)
Feeling of cared	0 (0)	6 (4.0)	63 (42.0)	67 (44.7)	14 (9.3)
Comparing with co – age	1 (0.7)	10 (6.7)	9 (6.0)	108 (72)	22 (14.7)
Social activities	0 (0)	15 (10.0)	17 (11.3)	98 (65.3)	20 (13.3)
Religious activities	2 (1.3)	10 (6.7)	5 (3.3)	89 (59.3)	44 (29.3)
Economic status	4 (2.7)	15 (10.0)	9 (6.0)	114 (76.0)	8 (5.3)
Relationship within family	2 (1.3)	12 (8.0)	11 (7.3)	101 (67.3)	24 (16.0)
Relationship outside family	2 (1.3)	11 (7.3)	18 (12.0)	100 (66.7)	19 (12.7)

**Table 1:** Respondent's level of satisfaction.

Table 1 shows that more than two third (67.3%) of the respondents were satisfied with their living condition, 64.7% were satisfied with their present health status, 79.3% and 74% of them were satisfied with their ability to involve in basic as well as intermediate activities. Similarly, 44.7% of them were satisfied with the care provided by family members, 72% were satisfied while comparing them with their age friends, 65.3% were satisfied with their abilities of involving in society, 59.3% were satisfied with their abilities of involving in religious

activities and 76% were satisfied with their economic status. Likewise, 67.33% of them were satisfied with their family relationship status and 66.77% were satisfied with their relationships with friends and relatives.

Table 2 reveals that 82.7%, 5.0% and 11.3% of the respondents were satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and dissatisfied respectively. Mean  $\pm$  SD of the overall life satisfaction of the respondents were  $37.42 \pm 4.14$  (range of score was 26-48 out of 55 Score).

Satisfaction Level	Number (n = 150)	Percentage
Dissatisfied	17	11.3
Neutral	9	6
Satisfied	124	82.7
Mean ± SD	37.42 ± 4.14	
Range	26-48	

**Table 2:** Overall life satisfaction level.

Similarly, there was no statistically significant association between overall life satisfaction of senior citizens with their age, sex, ethnicity, religion, education, living status, family types, family roles status and occupations at  $p > 0.05$ . Table 3 shows that there was statistically significant relationship with their overall life satisfaction and their status of property ownership ( $p = 0.019$ ), sufficient family income for ( $p = 0.001$ ), and financial support ( $p = 0.004$ ) of the respondents at  $p$  value  $< 0.05$  respectively. There is no statistical association between overall life satisfaction with care provided as needed and but significant relationship with financial support ( $p = 0.008$ ) for them at  $p$  value  $< 0.05$ .

Variables	Life satisfaction Scale				Chi Square Value ( $\chi^2$ )	p Value
	Satisfied		Dissatisfied			
	n = 133	n = 17	n	(%)		
<b>Property ownership</b>						
Yes	99	-74.4	8	-47.1	5.525	0.019
No	34	-25.6	9	-52.9		
<b>Family income</b>						
Enough for <6 months	11	-8.3	7	-41.2	15.455	0.001
Enough for >6 months	122	-91.7	10	-58.8		
<b>Major care provider</b>						
Own self	18	-13.5	3	-17.6	0.221	0.645
Dependent with others	115	-86.5	14	-82.5		
<b>Financial support</b>						
Self-dependent	28	-21.1	9	-52.9	8.248	0.004
Dependent with others	105	-78.9	8	-47.01		
Note: Significant value $< 0.05$						

**Table 3:** Association of overall life satisfaction with economic status and pattern of health care among respondents.

## Discussion

### Life satisfaction of senior citizens

In this study, most (88.6%) of the senior citizens were satisfied with their life, while 11.3% were dissatisfied. This finding is consistent with the findings of a study done on life satisfaction of elderly in between families and age homes by Vijayakumar et al. [4] in India found that about 90.2% in those living in families were satisfied. Similarly, a study conducted on an investigation on predictors of life satisfaction among the elderly by Eshkoo et al. [8] among non-institutionalized Malaysian elderly found that 90.4% of the elderly people were satisfied with their current life. Likewise, the study done on elements of life satisfaction amongst elderly people living in institutions in Malaysia by Dahlan et al. [6] found that 34% of them were satisfied, 38% reported neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 27% reported dissatisfied.

### Association of senior citizens' life satisfaction and selected socio-demographic variables

In this study, there was no statistically significant association with senior citizens' life satisfaction and education ( $p = 0.080$ ). A study carried out in Malaysia on an investigation on predictors of life satisfaction among the elderly also found that education ( $p = 0.833$ ) were not significant predictors of their life satisfaction [8]. This finding was also supported by an 8 years longitudinal study, done in Central of France by Gana et al. [9]. In contrast, a study conducted by Gautam et al. [10] on correlates of life satisfaction among Nepalese older adults living with a son in urban elderly of Kathmandu found that life satisfaction was significantly associated with education ( $p < 0.05$ ). Contrast result might be seen due to different setting and different population with this study.

In this study, though, there was no statistically significant association between overall life satisfaction with age ( $p = 0.654$ ), the number of high-level satisfactions was high in age group 60-70 years.

However, aging process may affect senior citizens' life satisfaction. Life satisfaction among them decreases as age increases beyond 65 years of age on a study conducted by Chen [11] on aging and life satisfaction. In contrast with the finding of this study, the study done by Won et al. [12] on life satisfaction and depression of among elderly living in the single-household in Korea, the level of life satisfaction was related to age ( $p=0.012$ ).

Similarly, the finding of this study shows that there was no statistically significant association ( $p=0.100$ ) of overall life satisfaction of senior citizens and gender. This finding was supported by various studies conducted on retired elderly on Croatia [13], on Portugal [14], and on Gorgan City [15]. This study revealed that there was no statistically significant association ( $p=0.141$ ) of their life satisfaction and religion. This finding was supported by a study conducted on life satisfaction of adults in retirement age in Portugal [14] as  $p$  value 0.127.

This study findings revealed that there was no statistically significant association of overall life satisfaction of senior citizens and their living status ( $p=0.949$ ). This finding was supported by the study done on life satisfaction among elderly in Croatia conducted by Brajkovic et al. [13] and another study done in Malaysia on predictors of life satisfaction among elderly by Eshkoo et al. [8] showed that there were no statistically significant association of their life satisfaction and living status. Likewise, the finding of this study shows that there is no statistically significant association of life satisfaction and occupation ( $p=0.808$ ) which was similar to the study carried out in Russia on socio-economic determinants of life satisfaction in later life by Kolonitsyna et al. [16] as  $p$  value 0.1402.

The finding of this study shows that there was statistically significant association of overall life satisfactions of senior citizens and economic status especially with property ownership ( $p=0.019$ ) and income sufficient for at least one year ( $p=0.001$ ). Similar finding was found in the study conducted on life satisfaction of older adult in Portugal by Britiller et al. [14] ( $p=0.010$ ). In a contrast, the study done on factors associated with the life satisfaction among the rural elderly in Odisha, India showed that there was no statistically significant association with ownership. Likewise, a study on health and quality of life outcomes conducted in India by Banjare et al. [17] found that the variables viz. ownership of house, ownership of land, monthly income negligibly influence the level of life satisfaction.

The finding of this study shows that there was no statistically significant association on overall life satisfaction and major care providers ( $p=0.102$ ) while there was statistically significant association of overall life satisfaction of senior citizens and available financial support ( $p=0.004$ ). Similar results were found on studies conducted by Ng et al. [18], Li et al. [19] in China and Freund et al. [20] in Zurich on senior citizens found that financial dependence on offspring was declared as an influential factor to the life satisfaction of elderly people. Having higher socioeconomic status, adequate family support, higher level of satisfaction with one's living environment/condition and staying on their own house among the senior population plays a crucial role in achieving life satisfaction [17].

The finding of this study shows that the level of life satisfaction is not statistically significant with demographic variables. This finding was supported by the studies done by Dahlan et al. [6] on elements of life satisfaction among elderly people living in institutions in Malaysia and study done by Joseph et al. [21] in Chandigarh on Life satisfaction among inhabitants of selected old age homes.

## Conclusion

This study concluded that most of the senior citizens were satisfied with their life, only few of them were dissatisfied. Similarly, the study found significant statistical significance with good economic status, ownership of property ( $p=0.019$ ) and having good family income ( $p=0.004$ ) and having sufficient financial support ( $p=0.001$ ). Hence, this study suggested that efforts should be directed towards enhancement of sufficient financial support, good family income, and property ownership to improve life satisfaction of senior citizens.

## Acknowledgement

This research was funded by the University Grants Commission (UGC), Nepal, under the Faculty Research Grant 2015. The researcher extended her heartfelt thanks to Maharajgunj Nursing Campus and authorities of Tarakeshwor Municipality for providing the opportunity to conduct this study. The researcher would also like to thank all senior citizens who were participated in this study.

## Limitations

This is a cross sectional study and results may change over time. The study is confined to Tarakeshwor only which made it difficult for the researcher to generalize the findings.

## Conflicts of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest for the present study.

## References

1. Puvill T (2017) PhD Defence Personnel Thomas Puvill on life satisfaction at old age. Leiden: Leyden Academy.
2. Vinsi MS (2014) A comparative study to assess the life satisfaction level among male and female geriatrics living in selected old age homes of Indore city (MP). *Int J Health Sci Res* 4: 241-243.
3. Hsu HC (2012) Trajectories and covariates of life satisfaction among older adults in Taiwan. *Arch Gerontol Geriatr* 55: 210-216.
4. Vijayakumar G, Devi ES, Jawahar P (2016) Life satisfaction of elderly in families and old age homes: A comparative study. *Int J Nurs Educ* 8: 94-99.
5. Kimm H, Sull JW, Gombojav B, Yi SW, Ohrr H (2012) Life satisfaction and mortality in elderly people: The Kangwha cohort study. *BMC Public Health* 12: 54.
6. Dahlan A, Nicol M, Maciver D (2010) Elements of life satisfaction amongst elderly people living in institutions in Malaysia: A mixed methodology approach. *Hong Kong J Occup Th* 20: 71-79.
7. Diener ED, Emmons RA, Larsen RJ, Griffin S (1985) The satisfaction with life scale. *J Pers Assess* 49: 71-75.
8. Eshkoo SA, Hamid TA, Mun CY, Shahar S (2015) An investigation on predictors of life satisfaction among the elderly. *IJASOS-International E-journal of Advances in Social Sciences* 1: 207-212.
9. Gana K, Bailly N, Saada Y, Joulain M, Alaphilippe D (2013) Does life satisfaction change in old age? Results from an 8-year longitudinal study. *J Gerontol B Psychol Sci Soc Sci* 68: 540-552.
10. Gautami R, Saito T, Kai I (2008) Correlates of life satisfaction among older Nepalese adults living with a son. *Biosci Trends* 2.
11. Chen C (2001) Aging and life satisfaction. *Soc Indic Res* 54: 57-79
12. Won MR, Choi YJ (2013) Are Koreans prepared for the rapid increase of the single-household elderly? Life satisfaction and depression of the single-household elderly in Korea. *Sci World J* 2013: 1-4.

13. Brajković L, Gregurek R, Kušević Z, Ratković AS, Braš M, et al. (2011) Life satisfaction in persons of the third age after retirement. *Coll Antropol* 35: 665-671.
14. Brittler MC, Pesigan JA, Pillado MB, Portuguese NM, Principe J (2013) Life satisfaction of adults in retirement age. *E-International Scientific Research Journal* 5: 122-137.
15. Chehregosha M, Bastaminia A, Vahidian F, Mohammadi A, Aghaeinejad A, et al. (2016) Life satisfaction index among elderly people residing in gorgan and its correlation with certain demographic factors in 2013. *Glob J Health Sci* 8: 41
16. Kolosnitsyna M, Khorkina N, Dorzhiev K (2014) What happens to happiness when people get older? Socio-economic determinants of life satisfaction in later life.
17. Banjare P, Dwivedi R, Pradhan J (2015) Factors associated with the life satisfaction amongst the rural elderly in Odisha, India. *Health Qual Life Outcomes* 13: 201.
18. Ng ST, Tey NP, Asadullah MN (2017) What matters for life satisfaction among the oldest-old? Evidence from China. *PloS One* 12: e0171799.
19. Li C, Chi I, Zhang X, Cheng Z, Zhang L, et al. (2015) Urban and rural factors associated with life satisfaction among older Chinese adults. *Aging Ment Health* 19: 947-954.
20. Freund AM (2008) Successful aging as management of resources: The role of selection, optimization, and compensation. *Res Hum Dev* 5: 94-106.
21. Joseph J, Ranjith KR, Kaur I, Ghai S, Sharma N (2014) Life satisfaction among inhabitants of selected old age homes at Chandigarh-A cross sectional survey. *Delhi Psychiatry Journal* 17: 357-361.