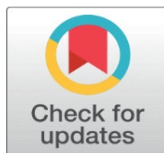
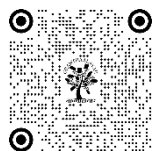


# LIFE SATISFACTION OF OLDER ADULTS IN MANIPUR

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## DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i4.2024.3880](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i4.2024.3880)

**Funding:** This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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## ABSTRACT

It is anticipated that a number of elderly people will steadily rise as their quality of life improves in all areas. By making such improvements, people can benefit society instead of causing unneeded problems for their families and wider community. It is now one of most important objectives. As an essential aspect in determining life quality as well as successful ageing, life satisfaction is concentrated upon different studies since older adults are considered at risk in various ways, it has an impact on life satisfaction. "Life satisfaction" refers to well-being in areas such as contentment, tranquillity, self-assurance, etc. Stated differently, "life satisfaction" results from reflective, personal, along global judgement about what a human being considers they are and have done with their life. So, a person's life satisfaction becomes a concern as it influences well-being and maintaining relationships with society, especially for elderly people

**Keywords:** old age, older adults, life satisfaction, Manipur.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The period of life that exceeds the typical lifespan of humans is known as old age. However, because old age has a varied connotation in every society, it is impossible to pinpoint its exact boundaries. A person who is 60 years of age or older is considered a 'senior citizen' or 'elderly' according to 'The National Policy on Older Persons,' which was established by GOI in January 1999. The number of people over 60 in India is rapidly increasing, although making up only 7.4% of the country's overall population at the start of the new millennium. This phase of life faces different stages with rapid changes in social scenarios. Issues associated with ageing are becoming more and more important, mostly socio-emotional insecurities. As people get older, they face positive as well as negative experiences. Some positive experiences are getting higher status in religious as well as social activities and receiving important opinions within the family. But the negative side is that when people get older, sometimes physical deterioration leads to social isolation and loneliness. This is due to various factors, such as retirement, a partner or friend's death, deteriorating financial condition, and loss of self-worth due to loss of social roles and confidence (A Singh 2009). So, the quality of life in old age is un-ignorable. Life satisfaction is an essential determinant of quality of life (T Vinsalia 2021).

From life satisfaction theory and four contributing factors, it is clear that life satisfaction is deep inner happiness that arises from individual life experiences. Level of life satisfaction impacts their psychological, physical, emotional, and

social well-being. It evaluates the positive attitudes of individuals towards their lives and reflects their feelings about the past, present, or future (K Kanto 2016). Neugarten (1961) proposed the concept of satisfaction with life for the first time. Many scholars believe life satisfaction is essential in older adults' extended life spans

So, this study is based on older adults in Manipur who live in their own homes. The increasing population of older adults has generated a need to investigate this area so that we can be responsive to this growing segment of our society. The paper will highlight the enhancement of the quality of life of older adults and the possibility for older adults to experience greater life satisfaction by identifying the issues as well as the socio-psychological factors influencing life satisfaction of the older adults. A wholly qualitative descriptive method is used to identify these factors. An in-depth semi-structured interview method is employed. Snowball sampling is used to select the participants. The whole interview is audio-recorded with prior permission from the respondents. The data is then interpreted and analysed thematically.

## **2. PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL OLD AGE PROBLEMS – SOCIAL ISSUES AFFECTING OLDER ADULTS**

The major forms of social discrimination against elderly people are disinterest and separation from younger people. More and more, respect solely for age is disappearing, and respect for the individual comes in its place. According to research, individuals have unfavourable opinions about becoming older, which are typically paired with anxiety brought on by the cult of youth. But these aren't the only social problems that older individuals face. They are also hindered by their physical state, restricted psycho-motor skills, and disengagement from active social engagement. The senior population is rapidly becoming more marginalized. Withdrawal from social roles and a reduction in interpersonal relationships are the first signs, which are exacerbated by restricted access to numerous institutions, products, and services. Isolation, passivity, and apathy are increased to the point of near total social disengagement.

The negative perceptions of old age can be readily identified to older persons. They feel disoriented, powerless, and unable of keeping up with the quick changes. The previously listed factors influence the prevalence of loneliness among the elderly. Loneliness is not the same as solitude. An account of the circumstances in which solitary may occur is provided by loneliness. While loneliness is more closely linked to a scenario, loneliness is typically linked to a free choice or experience brought on by a particular circumstance. Consequently, it acquires a negative connotation. Feelings of grief, longing, regret, and unfulfillment are all brought on by loneliness.

The following are main causes of loneliness and withdrawal in old age: moral and sociocultural distance; smaller social circles; death of a loved one; incomprehension by a loved one; fear of a harsh reality and non-acceptance of it; health issues that limit mobility; rising aggression; and extreme mood swings.

### **Adaptation problems**

It is one of the most critical social issues affecting the elderly. Elderly people are facing more and more adversities related to the ageing process and everyday problems on their own. Sometimes, adult children are a source of anguish instead of support. Elder abuse is becoming a severe problem. However, problem does not only occur within the family. Sometimes, it is elderly people themselves who are main authors of their troubles, especially when they are unable to accept help with time. Material challenges, institutional lack of support, indifference in this social group, or an incapacity to cope with a challenging circumstance are some of the causes of adjustment issues. Among most important social challenges impacting the elderly are adaptation issues. Older adults most frequently struggle with adaptation when faced with abrupt changes and intense emotions brought on by bewilderment, shame, Older individuals becoming lost in the midst of fast change, shifting moral and financial circumstances.

### **Socio-psychological factors**

#### **Role change**

In every society, culture ascribes role expectancies to specific age groups. Individuals evaluate these roles as their identity in their community. This identity can be classified in terms of personal and social identities. Main factor influencing their level of life satisfaction was their favourable opinion of their self-portrait. The changes within individual's roles and positions in their work life, family life, and social life according to advanced ages make role shifts, notably being an involved parent, whether as husband or friend, or loss of particular aspects, such as efficiency, autonomy, dignity, identity, along with authority. An increasing imbalance occurs between the number of roles gained and lost with the increase in ageing. Some contradictions resulting from this change can negatively divert people's emotions, damaging life satisfaction. Older persons are becoming less involved in both their social and private lives as a

result of aging-related reduction in roles. The change in the private and social status of elderly people was found to cause distress and difficulty in adjustment within the family and community. There has been considerable research and views about the impact of role loss on older adults. This study conveys that when people get older, having control and adjustment in one's life and receiving social respect and prestige are associated with better physical and psychological well-being. Imbalance between perceived expectations/demands from their family as well as their surroundings and ability to achieve or answer expectations may sometimes create stress, anxiety and sometimes depression, which affects mental health of senior citizens. Furthermore, diminishing participation in their surrounding social life and a decline in decision-making within family lead some older adults' lives to loneliness and social isolation. The degree of happiness is impacted by role loss in numerous ways in terms of gender, occupation, as well as living arrangement of older adults.

### **Retirement**

Retirement from employment involves an entirely novel social position for person since it causes him to start experiencing changes in his duties as well as interactions with his surroundings. The study found that retirement is welcomed with emotional dis-adjustment in some young-old groups. Retirement may be seen by some as a relief from the pressures of workplace. However, older adults, particularly young and old, are still waiting to experience this phenomenon. It has been discovered that they struggle to succeed in retirement and adjust to it. Retirement brings about changes in lifestyle, personal duties, and the significance and worth one places on oneself. For instance, Individuals who no longer play as important a part in the family after retirement might experience worthless and minimize their connections with others instead of achieving a new position. This disengagement from life may result in difficulties adjusting to social setting, which will ultimately impact life satisfaction. The level of life satisfaction due to retirement differs between people living in rural areas and urban areas.

### **Financial conditions**

The instability of one's financial situation was one of elements determining life satisfaction in old age in this study. Life satisfaction gets reduced by financial concerns in addition to loss of status as well as role in old age. A rise in financial stability may raise life satisfaction because it has negative impact on their activities, living conditions, perceived health, as well as their identity representations.

### **Social relationships**

Social relationships are among the most prominent factors affecting older adults' life satisfaction. This includes relationships between family members, friends, neighbours and other associates. According to study, people's ties with one another through frequent interactions that they believe hold personal significance are referred to as social relationships. This study finds that older people mainly prefer to contact close social network members, including spouses, children, and family members, who are able to provide warmth, connection, along feeling of acceptance. Being socially isolated and feeling lonely is an emotionally devastating feeling, especially for older adults in every society. Lack of complete or near social contact between an individual and its surrounding community defines social isolation. Loneliness is discomforting feeling of being alone or separated. Both social isolation and loneliness are hostile to a person's mental health. As the socio-economic status of the world changes, conditions change family dynamics, such as the deterioration of the traditional structure and value or priority differences between intergenerations. The younger generation sometimes engages in their problems and migrates to places with better financial opportunities. This change in family is a challenging adjustment for the older generations to accept and emotional disappointment. This results in depression and anxiety for some older generations. So, the importance of family in an older adult's life is immeasurable. Not only does family provide a social network, but the relationship an elderly keeps with their family and the qualitative social support received from the near ones directly affect their quality of life, i.e., health, mental state, degree of independence, along with social connections, all of which contribute to older adults' greater life satisfaction.

### **Leisure activities**

The willingness to spend time doing something was identified as another salient theme that emerged from the interview. Engaging in leisure activities has self-perceived health benefits. The positive influence of leisure activities makes them healthier and allows them to enjoy and come to terms with the last years of their lives. Participating in leisure activities prevents physical and emotional well-being from deteriorating quickly.

### 3. DISCUSSION

The findings presented in this paper are related to life satisfaction, which characterises the socio-psychological conditions of elderly persons who live in their own homes. This study have explored the facilitating and inhibiting socio-psychological factors that influenced of home-based older adults and the issues they are facing in the present condition in Manipur.

### 4. CONCLUSION

An individual who is ageing in life is faced with multiple challenges and disadvantages. Old age is marked by frailty and losses in different domains. They had to adjust to physical deterioration, emotional distress, social isolation, autonomy degradation, etc. Studies indicated that Life satisfaction continues to be an important construct in the ageing analysis. It is strongly related to different variables. Change in roles due to retirement and loss of a spouse is denoted as powerful indicator of older adults' life satisfaction. Other changes as well as losses complicate older adults' adaptive functioning and identity structure. Life satisfaction of older adult people was dependent not only on their ageing process but their capacity for adaptation, adjust and coping with changes coming along with ageing. Interpersonal meaningful support and relationships are the basis of an ideal society that embraces all age groups, especially the old age period. It is linked at both family and societal levels

Loneliness will haunt the mental health in life. This study suggests that these three factors are the root cause of improving and deteriorating the life satisfaction of older adults.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

None.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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