

Successful aging in Russian elderly people: primary data

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Successful aging is a construct aimed at describing positive psychological states, emotions and behavior in the elderly. Traditionally, most people perceive old age as a condition with extremely negative consequences. However, obviously the aging process takes place individually for different people and it depends on many factors. In Russia, the economic crisis, financial instability, poor access to medical care are objectively capable of making the lives of the elderly quite difficult, physically and psychologically. Nevertheless, even in difficult situations, some elderly people continue to actively cope with problems, having personal growth, experiencing positive emotions, doing what they like. They feel satisfaction with their lives. They are in successful aging.

The aim of this study was to elucidate the structure of the successful aging of older people in Russia, and to determine how some socio-demographic factors affect life satisfaction.

Materials and methods. We examined 140 people aged 55-90 years, of whom 72.9% were females, 27.1% were males. The majority of participants (85.3%) belonged to the Slavic ethnicity. 42.9% of respondents are residents of large cities (with a population of 1 million people or more). 47.1% have higher education. Half of the sample is on pension, while 48.6% continue to work. 52.9% are married, 22.9% are divorced, and 21.4% are widowed. 23.2% are atheists, while the other participants are religious in varying degrees.

To assess the level of successful aging, we used a questionnaire developed by us (Erzin, Gerashchenko, 2015). In previous studies, he showed good psychometric characteristics (α -Cronbach = 0.711, empirical validity $p = 0.763$). In this study, α -Cronbach = 0.91.

Results and discussion. Descriptive statistics showed that the following components of successful aging are the highest in the sample: "Family" (73.4), "Personal growth and positive emotions" (69.7), and "Work and hobbies" (65.42). Further, comparatively good indicators were revealed for the scale "Social interaction" (64.26). Relatively low indicators were the scale "Health" (60.86), "Financial Well-being" (52.55), "Past life satisfaction" (62.24). All scales are positively correlated with the overall index of successful aging ($p \leq 0,01$). Regression analysis showed that the level of successful aging of the survey sample directly depended on sex (0.334), while the reverse effect of age on successful aging (-0.254) was revealed. Other socio-demographic parameters (education, income, religiosity, marital status) have no significant impact on the subjective sense of well-being in the elderly.

It can be concluded that most of the participants are not satisfied with their financial condition. Indeed, the income of many pensioners in our country is characteristic of poor people. At the same time, the level of income in itself is not a significant predictor of the overall level of successful aging. Many people continue to be in their profession, even retired. Men are more active socially and financially. It allows them to have a longer sense of well-being. Access to health care and its quality are not very good in Russia. This determines the low indices of a sense of physical well-being. Disadvantages in this area can be compensated by an increasing activity in other clusters - social contacts, family, hobbies. This is what many Russian people are doing, trying to remain happy, overcoming the consequences of aging.

The conclusion. This study is the first step towards a large-scale study of successful aging in our country. The analysis showed that the most important spheres of life for elderly Russian people are the family, positive emotions, work and hobbies. The next stage will be the study of the role of several psychological factors (personality traits, coping, optimism, altruism, hope, flow) in shaping a sense of well-being in old age. Next, we will find out the significance of these factors for life-span and longevity.