

Research Article

Personal growth initiatives and life satisfaction among elderly people

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is: to describe personal growth initiative in the elderly, to describe the life-satisfaction in the elderly, and to determine the correlation between personal growth initiative and life satisfaction in the elderly. This study uses a descriptive correlational research design, with a simple random sampling method. The sample consisted of 88 elderly. Data was collected from the personal growth initiative scale and life satisfaction scale. All data obtained were analyzed by descriptive analysis and correlational product-moment by Pearson. The result indicated that commonly the elderly have high personal growth initiative commonly the elderly have high life satisfaction personal growth initiative is positively associated with life satisfaction among the elderly ($r = 0,692$; $p < 0,01$) which means if personal growth initiative of elderly is high as well as the life satisfaction.

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Introduction

Late adulthood is the closing period of one's passage of time. Many problems arise when an individual is facing or experiencing this life period, especially when there are many problems occurring related to psycho-social issues. Referring to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 13 of 1998 on the welfare of the elderly, an individual can be mentioned as an elderly when he or she has reached the age of sixty years or older. The most prominent change in late adulthood is the process of aging, the process of aging is the natural process that occurs in conjunction with the decrease of physical, psychological, and social conditions that interact with one another (Kuntjoro, 2002).

Engin & Raşan (2017) stated that the root of the sociological problem for elderly people is loneliness, which further arises the feeling of alienation from their environment, the un-empowerment, confidence, uselessness, dependency, the estrangement from the mass, post power syndrome, etc. The late adulthood period is also the critical period when an individual re-evaluates each and every single step of success and failure that he or she has been going through (Indriani, 2012).

The age of retirement is one of many factors of the above-mentioned problems because when an individual experiences the age of retirement he or she will feel that he or she no longer has the ability to become productive. The

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age of retirement sometimes is deemed as a dissatisfaction fact so retirement also belongs one of many stressors for the elderly. In addition, at retirement age, there is a phenomenon of post power syndrome or powerlessness where individuals feel a loss of power along with the loss of a job (Chung, 1999)

The change of status from an active employer in the past to the age of retirement will have an impact on his or her life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is an individual cognitive assessment of the satisfaction he or she felt during his or her life. Such impact is the result of the comparison between what is happening now and what is assumed as the ideal condition for an individual (Frisch 2006).

Life satisfaction in the elderly can be influenced by their daily activities. An individual who has activities and is still actively working in old age tends to have high life satisfaction. An elderly person who actively participates in activities usually has more ability to adjust himself well than an elderly person who just stays at home (Kourkouta, Iliadis, & Monios, 2015). This statement is supported by activity theory which states that the older a person is, the more he or will maintain his or her social, physical, or emotional relationships. This theory argues that activity is the essence of life that someone is experiencing throughout his or her life. Someone who remains physically, mentally, and socially active will make better adjustments with the advancement of his or her age.

One theory that can explain a person's active role is personal growth initiative or which can be translated as self-growth initiative. The self-growth initiative is defined as active, individual involvement in the self-development process (Robitschek, 1998). Elderly people who are able to respond well to their age will try to find activities that are beneficial for their lives, even though they have retired. Many elderly people are still working and have succeeded in developing their competencies despite the limitations they experienced in their old age. According to research conducted by Robitschek and Kashubeck (1999), self-growth initiatives have a positive correlation with psychological well-being or psychological well-being and emotional well-being or emotional well-being. Self-growth initiatives have also been associated with an increase in positive affect and a decrease in negative affect (Robitschek, 1998). Life satisfaction can also be generated from satisfaction one has in his or her daily activities, Menec (2003) conducted a longitudinal study of the elderly about the overall activities they do, and the results of such research are the activity one does can trigger a higher level of happiness, higher level of the feeling of usefulness, and reduce the death rate so that it can put an individual into his or her successful aging.

One of the organizations that aim to develop the potential and ensure the welfare of retired civil servants is the Persatuan Wredatama Republik Indonesia (PWRI). PWRI is a place for the elderly to be able to gather to spend time together, share information, and life problems as well as exchange experiences so that they are always enthusiastic about living their life. PWRI of the Kedungkandang branch was deemed appropriate to be the subject of research because this organization was the most active in honing the potential of the elderly, such as in arts, social and religious matters.

Based on the description above, the author intends to examine whether there is a relationship between personal growth initiatives and life satisfaction in the elderly at the PWRI Kedungkandang Branch, Malang. The purpose of this study was to describe the self-growth initiative of the elderly, to describe their life satisfaction of the elderly, and determine the relationship between self-growth initiatives and life satisfaction in the elderly.

Life satisfaction is one of the cognitive components of subjective well-being (Diener, 2009). Life satisfaction is how a person's cognitive ability assesses his entire life, such as satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Life satisfaction is the result of a comparison of the current state with the state that is considered a person's ideal standard (Frisch, 2006). A person's life satisfaction will be greater if the difference between what is expected and what is achieved is getting smaller. This is in accordance with what was disclosed by Neugarten et al. (1968) that elderly life satisfaction is addressed in the form of a positive self-concept that reflects the compatibility between past ideals and present life conditions.

According to Markides & Martin (1978) the factors that can support life satisfaction are income, an active lifestyle, and a network of friends and family. Diener (2009) states that individuals who have high life satisfaction are individuals who have important goals in their lives and have succeeded in achieving these goals, they feel that their lives are

meaningful and have important goals and values, even though they judge that their lives are not perfect but they have a desire to grow and love a challenge.

According to Neugarten, et al (1968), elderly life satisfaction is a condition that includes five aspects as follows: feeling happy with one's everyday life, considering life to be full of meaning, and accepting sincerely the conditions of life, feeling that they have succeeded in achieving their goals and absorbing their values in life, have a positive self-image, and have an optimistic life attitude and a happy mood.

Personal growth initiative or which can be translated as a self-growth initiative is defined as a person's conscious and active involvement in the process of growth and development of him or herself and continues to hone his or her potential. According to Robitschek (1998), there are two things that underlie self-growth initiatives, namely cognitive and behavioral components. Cognitive components provide support and motivation for personal growth such as knowing how to change and believing that the change can be made by him or her. Whereas the behavioral component is a person's initiative to be really involved in the change process.

Someone who has high personal growth tends to be more open to experiencing new things (open to experiences), always tries to develop themselves, has definite life goals, and tries to achieve these goals (Compton & Hoffman, 2012). People who have high self-growth initiative and know the direction of their goals for growth are able to take advantage of opportunities for personal growth, seek opportunities for creativity and make adaptive solutions (Robitschek & Kashubeck, 1999).

According to Robitschek, et al. (2012), self-growth initiatives consist of four dimensions, namely: planfulness, readiness for change, intentional behavior, and using resources. The dimensions of planfulness and readiness for change are cognitive elements, while the dimensions of intentional behavior and using resources are behavioral elements.

- The dimension of planfulness, assesses the extent to which individuals feel they are able to understand and plan their growth process.
- The dimension of readiness for change measures the individual's readiness to change which will result in personal growth.
- The dimension of intentional behavior, involves conscious behavioral change for self-development and realizing individual potential.
- The dimension of using resources includes the willingness and ability of individuals to utilize external resources so that they can support the growth process.

The latter dimension is not in line with personal growth theory. However, the ability to search for and utilize assistance may have an impact on the process of personal growth.

Method

Research Design

The analytical techniques used in this research are descriptive and correlation analysis. Descriptive analysis is used to describe in general the research results. The description is carried out using group norms which are arranged based on the absolute mean (average). Correlation analysis was carried out using Pearson's Product Moment technique.

Participants

The research subjects consist of 88 members of the PWRI of Kedungkandang Branch, Malang, comprising of males and females, more than 60 years old, and who have been retired. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling drawn from a total population of 112. The research sample size is determined based on the Slovin formula with an accuracy limit or critical value of 5%.

Data Collection Tools

The measuring instrument in this study uses the self-growth initiative scale which consists of 46 items and a reliability coefficient of 0.947, and the life satisfaction scale which consists of 57 items with a reliability coefficient of 0.961. Both

scales use the summed rating scale method or the likert model which consists of four alternative answers, namely Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. the self-growth initiative scale is used to reveal how much self-growth ability the research sample has, arranged based on the cognitive component with the dimensions of planfulness and readiness for change, and the behavioral component with the dimensions of intentional behavior and using resources.

The life satisfaction scale is used to express how much life satisfaction is felt by the elderly. The Life Satisfaction Scale is based on the following aspects: feeling happy with everyday life, considering life to be meaningful and accepting sincerely the conditions of life, feeling that they have succeeded in achieving their goals and objectives in life, having a positive self-image, and having an optimistic life attitude and a happy heart condition.

Research Procedure

The steps taken in collecting research data are field surveys to determine the number and characteristics of PWRI members of the Kedungkandang branch. Then arrange a research permit at the Faculty of Psychology Universitas Negeri Malang (UM). The next step is to prepare and research the instruments that will be used for research, namely the Self-growth initiative scale and life satisfaction scale to be distributed to research respondents and then ask for permission from PWRI to conduct research by bringing a research permit from the Faculty of Psychology of UM at the same time determining the time of data collection. Next, the researcher distributed the instrument to the members of the PWRI Kedungkandang branch, the subjects filled out the instrument under the direction and supervision of the researcher. After that, the instruments were collected again, then tabulation and data analysis were carried out.

Results

Descriptively, it can also be seen that the elderly self-growth initiative in the PWRI Kedungkandang branch is generally high, as evidenced by 55 subjects (62.5%) classified as high. As for life satisfaction, it is known that as many as 66 people, or equivalent to 75% of the research subjects are included in the high classification, so it can be concluded that in general the elderly in the PWRI Kedungkandang branch have high life satisfaction. The classification of the two variables can be seen in the following table 1:

Table 1.

The Result of Statistical Description

Interval	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Self-Growth Initiatives			
$92 < X \leq 138$	High	55	62.5 %
$138 < X \leq 184$	Very High	33	37.5 %
Life Satisfaction			
$114 < X \leq 171$	High	66	75 %
$171 < X \leq 228$	Very High	22	25 %

The results of the normality test showed that the data of the two variables in this study were normally distributed. For the self-growth initiatives variable, the KS-Z statistic is 0.087 with $p = 0.095$. For the life satisfaction variable, the KS-Z statistic is 0.078 with $p = 2.00$. The results of the normality test can be seen in the following table 2:

Table 2.

Normality Test Data

Variable	KS-Z Statistics	Sig	Note	Conclusion
Self-Growth Initiatives	0.087	0.095	$p > 0.05$	Normal
Life Satisfaction	0.078	0.200	$p > 0.05$	Normal

The linearity test results show that the relationship between the two variables is linear. In this study, the results of the linearity test to the self-growth initiative variable of elderly life satisfaction are F is as much of 86.040 with $p = 0.00$. The results of linearity testing can be seen in the following table 3:

Table 3.*Data Linearity Test Result*

Variable	F	Sig	Note	Conclusion
IPD and Life Satisfaction	86.040	0.000	$p < 0.05$	Linear

The results of hypothesis testing with correlation analysis showed that there was a positive relationship between the self-growth initiative variable and life satisfaction ($r_{xy} = 0.692$; $p < 0.05$). This means that if a self-growth initiative is high, life satisfaction is also high, if a self-growth initiative is low, life satisfaction is also low. The results of hypothesis testing can be seen in the following table 4:

Table 4.*Data Hypothesis Testing Result*

Variable		Significance	Conclusion
IPD and Life Satisfaction	0.692	$p < 0.01$	Positive Correlation

Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the research hypothesis test, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between self-growth initiatives and life satisfaction in the elderly at PWRI Kedungkandang. The magnitude of the correlation between self-growth initiative and life satisfaction indicates that there is a strong relationship, and a positive sign on the correlation score indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between self-growth initiative and life satisfaction. So it can be concluded that the higher the self-growth initiative, the higher the life satisfaction of the elderly, this condition means that the elderly who are actively developing their potential will be more satisfied with their whole life. On the other hand, elderly people who are passive and have no desire to develop will tend to be dissatisfied with their lives. The existence of a positive and significant correlation between the two variables supports that self-growth initiative is one of the factors for the elderly to feel satisfaction in their lives.

The results of this study are relevant to the results of research conducted by Sood, Gupta, and Bakhshi (2012) which found that there was a positive relationship between self-growth initiative and life satisfaction in adolescents living in orphanages. Research by Robitschek and Kashubeck (1999) found that self-growth initiative is positively correlated with well-being and negatively correlated with distress, which means that the higher the level of self-growth initiative, the higher the welfare felt by individuals and the lower the level of distress, including depression and anxiety.

If a person has a high self-growth initiative level, he will be more active to improve himself in the desired direction, when experiencing problems, people with a high self-growth initiative will tend to feel less stressed than someone with a low self-growth initiative (Hardin, et al. 2007). Robitschek (1998) also added that self-growth initiative encourages individuals to continue to seek challenges and develop themselves which will result in the achievement of life goals and personal fulfillment, achieving life goals in the elderly will lead to feelings of satisfaction and happiness.

In essence, someone with a high self-growth initiative will always try to find ways to facilitate his desires so that these desires can be achieved, the success of this achievement will certainly have a positive influence on life satisfaction. More life satisfaction can be achieved when a person is active, so a high self-growth initiative will increase life satisfaction. Older people who still have the desire and opportunity to develop themselves, in theory, will be more satisfied than someone who is just unemployed at home. Life satisfaction is also influenced by a high self-growth initiative because someone with a high self-growth initiative is more able to cope with life's problems and has an effective coping strategy. According to

the results of observations and interviews in the field, the life satisfaction felt by the elderly is more influenced by social support, fun activities, and physical health.

Based on the results of this study, a positive relationship between self-growth initiatives and life satisfaction in the elderly at PWRI Kedungkandang of Malang is clearly visible. This is because in general the elderly in the PWRI Kedungkandang branch of Malang have high self-growth initiatives and are followed by high life satisfaction.

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