



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Aging Perception and Life Satisfaction in Older Adults

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ABSTRACT

Considering that the population's rapid aging may affect society, it is essential to know how older adults perceive life satisfaction and aging. Life satisfaction plays a vital role in experiencing loss in aging. On the other hand, the perception of aging can serve as a measure for assessing an individual's satisfaction with aging and reflects the individual's adaptation to aging-related changes. This study aims to evaluate the relationship between the life satisfaction of the elderly population, the perception of aging, and the effect of demographic variables. The study conducted an online survey on a random representative sample of 273 participants aged 60 and over. "The Ageing Perceptions Scale" and "Satisfaction with Life Scale" were used in the study. Hierarchical multiple linear regression was used to reveal the crucial determinants of life satisfaction and the aging perception of the elderly. Correlation analysis was performed to determine the relations of the variables with each other. As a result of the research, the correlation between life satisfaction and old age perception was significant ($r=.203$ $p<0.01$). It is seen that the perception of old age increases as the age progresses, and life satisfaction is high in individuals with a heightened perception of old age. Life satisfaction and perception of old age are higher in individuals aged 75 and over ($p<0.01$). Understanding the concept of life satisfaction and perception of aging and its determinants may contribute to increasing the satisfaction of the elderly with aging and their adaptation to age-related changes.

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Yaşlı Bireylerde Yaşlanma Algısı ve Yaşam Doyumunu

ÖZET

Nüfusun hızlı yaşlanmasının toplum üzerinde etkileri olabileceği düşünüldüğünde, yaşlı yetişkinlerin yaşam doyumunu ve yaşlılığı nasıl algıladıklarını bilmek önemlidir. Yaşam doyumunu, yaşlanmada kayıp yaşama sürecinde çok önemli bir rol oynar. Yaşlanma algısı ise bireyin yaşlanmayla ilgili memnuniyetini değerlendirmek için bir ölçü olarak hizmet edebilir ve bireyin yaşlanmayla ilişkili değişikliklere uyumunu yansıtır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, yaşlı nüfusun yaşam doyumunu ile yaşlanma algısı arasındaki ilişkiyi ve demografik değişkenlerin etkisini değerlendirmektir. Çalışmada 60 yaş ve üzerindeki 273 katılımcıdan oluşan temsili rastgele örnekleme online anket yapıldı. Araştırmada "Yaşlılığın Algılanması Ölçeği" ve "Yaşam Doyumu Ölçeği" kullanıldı. Yaşlılığın yaşam doyumunu ve yaşlanma algısının önemli belirleyicilerini ortaya koymak için hiyerarşik çoklu doğrusal regresyon, değişkenlerin birbirleriyle ilişkilerini belirlemek üzere korelasyon analizi yapılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda yaşam doyumunu ile yaşlılık algısı arasındaki korelasyon anlamlı ($r=.203$ $p<0.01$) bulunmuştur. Yaş ilerledikçe yaşlılık algısının arttığı, yaşlılık algısı yüksek olan bireylerde yaşam doyumunun da yüksek olduğu görülmektedir. Yaşam doyumunu ve yaşlılık algısı 75 yaş ve üzeri yaşta bireylerde diğerlerinden daha yüksektir ($p<0,01$). Yaşam doyumunu ve yaşlanma algısı kavramının ve belirleyicilerinin anlaşılması, yaşlıların yaşlanmadan memnuniyetlerinin ve yaşa bağlı değişikliklere uyumlarının artırılmasına katkı sağlayabilir.

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1.INTRODUCTION

The rapid aging of societies and the need for a prosperous aging society have become more critical than ever. To promote a thriving and quality aging society, it is essential to understand better people's perceptions of aging, their life satisfaction, and the meaning of successful aging and to identify the challenges

associated with aging (Cheng et al., 2021). Aging is an inevitable process for every individual. Today, an increasing number of people are reaching the age where the functional decline is more pronounced (Pu et al., 2014), with social functions gradually decreasing in old age (Hou et al., 2020).

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Older adults who cannot manage daily life independently may have a different perspective on life satisfaction than those with preserved self-care capacity. The transition from an independent to a dependent life in healthy and daily living activities may change the views on the factors that increase life satisfaction (Borg et al., 2006). Positive expectations about aging also result in greater satisfaction with the social environment and, consequently, more significant interaction and social communication among the elderly (Shoushtari-Moghaddam et al., 2022). Therefore, considering the subjective criteria of successful aging, the individual's perception of aging and life satisfaction should not be ignored.

1.1. Perception of Ageing

Research on the perception of aging has shown that perceptions can play an important role in successful aging, especially regarding physical and mental health and longevity (Cheng et al., 2021).

Measuring the perception of aging is an appropriate and accurate indicator for predicting a person's future health status and determining the extent to which an individual's satisfaction with aging and adaptation to life has changed at this stage. Each person may have different social functions and perceptions of aging depending on their attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and subjective and social norms. A person living in a society with a high level of respect for the elderly will be able to perform better and have a more positive perception of aging. In addition to the above, the welfare and obligations that society provides to older adults should be considered as an influential factor in social functionality and perception of aging (Shoushtari-Moghaddam et al., 2022). People in old age may adopt a range of aging perceptions from positive to negative depending on their age, gender, education level, health status, cultural characteristics, and social status in society. The perception of aging is defined as the evaluation of each individual's aging process (Wurm et al., 2013). In other words, this type of perception expresses the experiences and expectations of the individual regarding the aging process from negative to positive (Wolff et al., 2017). A positive attitude towards aging is a form of psychological resistance to age-related limitations (Shoushtari-Moghaddam et al., 2022). Research has also shown that how adults perceive the aging process can significantly impact their health and well-being (Siebert et al., 2018).

The perception of aging affects social behaviors, expectations of the elderly, sense of well-being, and adaptation to the aging process. The changes that occur in the aging process have profound effects on individuals' quality of life and mental health. If the older adult perceives these changes negatively, the level of flexibility and adaptability decreases (Kiarsipour et al., 2017). The experience and perception of aging are of great importance to middle-aged and older people as it is associated with well-being, self, and identity, as well as health and behavioral outcomes. The formation of each individual's perceptions and experiences of aging is a dynamic process related to the self, social norms, and their interaction. It reflects the individual's internalization of social norms (Demakakos et al., 2017). A positive perception of

aging benefits physical and mental health and is a protective factor in physical functioning in old age (Sargent-Cox et al., 2012). Alternatively, having negative perceptions of aging can have devastating effects on the physical, mental, behavioral, and social functions of the elderly (Bai, 2014). Many older individuals expect to become more dependent, suffer more aches and pains, and have less energy as they age (Sarkisian et al., 2002). There is evidence that older individuals use these beliefs to make sense of and contextualize their health, disability, and aging experiences (Levy, 2009). The expectations and assumptions of elderly individuals about aging are generally negative, emphasizing the decrease in health and functionality (Sarkisian et al., 2002). On the other hand, individuals with a high perception of aging will have higher life satisfaction. The assessment of aging is mainly intersubjective, based on lifelong association and feedback from others and socialization (Hagestad & Settersten, 2015).

1.2. Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is considered one of the indicators of successful psychological adjustment in old age, where a person often faces changes and losses in health, physical and cognitive functioning, social participation, and productive activities (Allerhand et al., 2014). Life satisfaction is influenced by social resources such as social relationships, social environment, financial independence, and access to adequate medical care. As a social factor, social capital is evaluated as an element that increases life satisfaction in older adults according to its structural and cognitive dimensions (Wang et al., 2022).

There is a close relationship between life satisfaction, an important factor in an individual's well-being, and physical and mental health (Kiarsipour et al., 2017). Life satisfaction is a subjective measure of well-being that reflects an individual's cognitive judgment about his life (Hong et al., 2019). It is often used as an indicator to assess the well-being of older individuals. Satisfaction with life, one of the primary predictors of subjective well-being, refers to the personal evaluation of life as a whole (Miller et al., 2019). Individuals report high life satisfaction if their assessment of living conditions is consistent with their expectations. Among older people, higher life satisfaction is directly associated with positive impact, better mental and physical condition, and successful aging (Bai et al., 2018). Especially in older adults population, life satisfaction should be considered as a multidimensional structure that includes areas such as physical health, mental health, socioeconomic status, community and family relations, and environment (Lim et al., 2016).

Life satisfaction is an important component of successful aging, indicating subjective well-being associated with health and death among older adults. It is one of the main determinants of well-being that reflects the cognitive judgmental aspect of the individual. Older adults with poor health status have a high tendency to express low life satisfaction. However, the high socioeconomic level of older adults population, having adequate family support, higher satisfaction with the environment/condition in which the indivi-

dual lives, and staying at home play an important role in ensuring successful aging (Banjare et al., 2015).

In order to improve life satisfaction in the elderly, it is necessary to consider factors such as satisfaction with the residential environment, neighborhood relationships, economic situation, maintaining friendships, family relationships, physical health status, marital status, job or career satisfaction, and finally satisfaction with other aspects of life. Life satisfaction is affected by various factors such as demographic structure, financial resources, health, physical condition, mental state, social support, social cohesion, and the number of diseases (Banjare et al., 2015). There is strong evidence that factors related to health, functional ability, an individual's perception of health, and independence play an important role in life satisfaction (Fagerström et al., 2007). Individuals with a high sense of life satisfaction can experience more positive emotions, positively evaluate themselves, their past and future, others and events around them, and describe themselves as pleasant. While individuals with low life satisfaction assess their past and future, others, events, and life situations as unpleasant, they experience more negative emotions such as anxiety and depression (Kiarsipour et al., 2017). Social support can reduce the negative impact on life satisfaction (Hillera's et al., 2001).

The number of studies dealing with the life satisfaction of the elderly is increasing daily in Turkey (Oztop et al., 2009; Kaçan Softa et al., 2015; Aydiner Boylu & Günay, 2018). Despite the importance of active social life in old age, little attention has been paid to investigating the effect of people's perceptions of aging on life satisfaction. Due to the increase in the negative perception of aging and the expectation of a decrease in life satisfaction with increasing age, in the present study, how the life satisfaction of older adults in Turkey changes according to age and how they perceive aging has been examined. The study's primary purpose is to evaluate the relationship between the perception of aging and life satisfaction in older adults and the effect of demographic variables.

2.METHOD

2.1. Study Group

The research was carried out on individuals over 60 (considering UN age classification) to evaluate the relationship between the perception of aging and life satisfaction and the effect of demographic variables. In the study, it was assumed that there would be a relationship between the perception of aging and life satisfaction and that the independent variables would have a high probability of creating changes in the dependent variables. Guilford (1954) stated that the sample size should be at least 200, Tabachnick and Fidell (2015) stated that the minimum number of observations should be 300, and Nunnally (1978) stated that the sample size should be 10 times the number of items. In line with these data, 273 healthy older adults who agreed to fill out the questionnaire were included in the study. Before the research, ethics committee approval was obtained from Pamukkale University Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee (23.02.2022 and 04-17 meeting/decision). Research data was collected thro-

ugh an online questionnaire using the "Qualtrics Research Suite." In addition to aging perception and life satisfaction scale questions, questions about socio-demographic characteristics were asked to the participants. The online questionnaire was filled out between March 2022 and May 2022. In order to evaluate the adequacy of the sample, the Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient was calculated, and the value was found to be 0.911.

2.2. Data Collection Tool

The survey consists of three sections; the first section includes demographic information such as age, gender, education level, with whom the individual lives, the field of work, perceived income, and activity level. This section also includes 14 five-point Likert-type positive and negative (strongly agree - strongly disagree) sentences under the question "What do you think old age is?".

In the second part, *The Ageing Perceptions Scale (POA)* developed by Demakakos et al. (2017) was used. This 12-item scale, which evaluates people's perceptions of aging, is one-dimensional. Responses were rated (very positive-very negative) using a five-point Likert-type scale consisting of positive and negative sentences. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's α) of the data collected from the study group within the scope of this study was found to be .600, which is an acceptable level.

In the third part, the "*Satisfaction With Life Scale*" (SWLS), developed by Diener et al. (1985) and consisting of five items, was used to determine the life satisfaction of elderly individuals. The scale, a Likert type, ranges between "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree" and is evaluated with 1-7 points. The score that can be obtained from the scale varies between 7-35. A high score on the scale indicates a high level of life satisfaction. The Turkish adaptation of the scale was made by Köker (1991), and the internal consistency of the scale was calculated as $\alpha = .85$. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's α) of the data collected from the study group within the scope of the research was found to be .913, and it was at an excellent level.

The importance of this study lies in its focus on the views of older adults. Such information can contribute to assessing the effectiveness of current aging policies and setting research or policy targets on aging. In addition, the study is important because it covers a gap in the existing literature where the aging experiences and perceptions of the elderly and their life satisfaction have not been studied extensively.

2.3. Analysis of Data

SPSS 25.0 package program was used to evaluate the data of the research. For the content and construct validity of the scale, the data of 273 elderly individuals who answered the perception of aging (PA) and life satisfaction (LS) scales were transferred to the computer environment. In this direction, first of all, it was examined whether there were deficiencies and errors in the data. While evaluating the data, descriptive statistical methods (number, percentage, mean, standard deviation) were used. Mann-Whitney U Test was

used to compare quantitative data between two groups, Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to compare parameters between groups in case of more than two groups, and Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine the group that caused the difference. Research findings were evaluated at a 95% confidence interval and a 5% significance level. In the study, correlation and regression analyzes were performed to determine the relations of the variables with each other.

3. RESULTS

The socio-demographic information regarding the age, gender, education level, marital status, who they live with at home, occupation, perceived income level, and activity level of older adults included in the study are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the participating older adults (N= 273)

<i>Socio-demographic characteristics</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Age	60-64	147	53,8
	65-69	75	27,5
	70-74	36	13,2
	75+	15	5,5
Gender	Female	155	56,8
	Male	118	43,2
Education level	High school	65	23,8
	Associate Degree	47	17,2
	License	134	49,1
	Graduate	27	9,9
Marital status	Married	222	81,3
	Widowed / Divorced	42	15,4
	Single / never married	9	3,3
People they live with	Lives alone	50	18,3
	Lives with a spouse	149	54,6
	Lives with his spouse and children	74	27,1
Perceived Income Level	Low	82	30,0
	Middle	173	63,4
	High	18	6,6
Activity Level	Very active	20	7,3
	Active	177	64,8
	Very little active	67	24,6
	Not active at all	9	3,3

The elderly were asked, "what do you think old age is?" and their responses to positive situations were also positive. When these are ranked according to the arithmetic mean value, it is seen that positive responses such as "being tolerant," "a wise person who is consulted," "self-realization," and "the happiest time of life" are prioritized. On the other hand, the rate of respondents who agree with the most negative responses, from the most negative to the statements "old age is being excluded from the social sphere," "old age is helplessness, hopelessness," "being financially needy" and "feeling lonely," is lower.

When the responses to the question "What do you think old age is?" are associated with demographic characteristics, it is understood that the participation in the statement "old age is the happiest time of life" decreases with increasing age ($F=2,961$ $p<0.033$). In contrast, the effect of the age variable on other positive statements is not significant ($p>0.05$). On the other hand, participation in negative statements such

as "feeling close to death" and "feeling lonely" increased with increasing age ($p<0.05$). Those with a low level of education characterized old age as "a wise person who is consulted," while on the other hand, they stated that old age is "being excluded from the social sphere" ($p<0.05$). Those in the low-income group defined old age as "being financially needy," while those in the lower and upper-income groups defined it as "not being able to work or produce," "being excluded from the social sphere," "feeling lonely," and "deterioration of health." The gender variable was not significant in defining old age ($p>0.05$). The elderly with low activity levels characterized old age as "not being able to do what one wants, not being able to meet basic needs, being financially needy, not being able to work, not being able to produce, being excluded from the social sphere, helplessness, hopelessness, feeling lonely and deterioration of health" ($p<0.05$).

Table 2. Descriptive values for the perception of older ages (TAPS) and life satisfaction (SWLS) scales (N=273)

<i>Scale</i>	<i>Aritm. mean±SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
The Ageing Perceptions Scale - ELSA	34,12±4,84	23	50
Satisfaction with Life Scale -SWLS	15,57±6,33	5	35

$r=.203$ **

The arithmetic mean for the perception of the aging scale was $34,12 \pm 4,84$ and $15,57 \pm 6,33$ for the life satisfaction scale. Both averages are above the median value. A weak relationship ($r=,203$ $p<0.01$) was found between the perception of aging (PA) and life satisfaction (LSS) (Table 2). Likewise, there is a weak relationship between age and perception of old age ($r=,203$ $p<0.01$) and life satisfaction ($r=,119$ $p<0.05$). This shows that the perception of old age increases slightly with age, and life satisfaction is also

high in individuals with a high perception of old age. There is a weak inverse relationship between perceived social support and life satisfaction ($r=-,284$ $p<0.001$). The exact relationship is also valid for the support provided by family members, friends, and private individuals ($p<0.001$). This shows that life satisfaction decreases as social support increases. On the other hand, no significant relationship was found between perceived social support and perception of old age ($p>0.05$).

Table 3. Distribution of older adults The Ageing Perceptions Scale scores according to their socio-demographic characteristics (N= 273)

Socio-demographic characteristics	Category	n	Aritm. mean \pm SD	Test value	p
Age	60-64	147	33,47 \pm 4,36	KW= 8,084	0.044*
	65-69	75	34,17 \pm 4,65		
	70-74	36	35,11 \pm 6,03		
	75+	15	37,80 \pm 5,57		
Gender	Female	155	33,85 \pm 4,68	U= 8941.5 (Z= -.316)	0.752
	Male	118	34,47 \pm 5,04		
Education level	High school	65	34,60 \pm 4,19	KW= 3,078	0.380
	Associate Degree	47	33,70 \pm 4,84		
	License	134	33,77 \pm 4,96		
	Graduate	27	35,37 \pm 5,62		
Occupation† (worked or re-tired)	Education	116	33,30 \pm 4,28	KW= 15,595	0.029*
	Health	17	37,47 \pm 5,78		
	Social	35	34,14 \pm 4,82		
	Technical	41	33,61 \pm 4,98		
	Agricultural production	11	36,91 \pm 5,58		
	Security	5	35,80 \pm 4,02		
	Business owner	32	35,13 \pm 5,04		
	Didn't work	16	33,25 \pm 5,00		
Marital status	Married	222	33,86 \pm 4,71	KW= 1,740	0.419
	Widowed / Divorced	42	35,24 \pm 5,37		
	Single / never married	9	35,22 \pm 5,26		
People they live with	Lives alone	50	35,42 \pm 5,38	KW= 3,026	0.220
	Lives with a spouse	149	33,72 \pm 4,83		
	Lives with his spouse and children	74	34,04 \pm 4,37		
Perceived income level	Low	82	34,78 \pm 5,13	KW= 8,595	0.014**
	Middle	173	33,53 \pm 4,38		
	High	18	36,78 \pm 4,55		
Activity level	Very active	20	34,95 \pm 3,53	KW= 2,411	0.492
	Active	177	33,76 \pm 4,57		
	Very little active	67	34,70 \pm 5,92		
	Not active at all	9	35,00 \pm 3,28		

†Education (teacher, lecturer, etc.), Health (Physician, psychologist, nurse, midwife, etc.), Social (Law, judiciary, sociology, finance, social work, management, etc.), Technical (Engineer, architect, technician, technician, master, worker, etc.), Agricultural production (producer, farmer, worker, etc.), Security (Soldier, police, guard, etc.), Business owner (businessman, self-employed, self-employed), Didn't work

* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

There was no significant relationship between the perception of aging and gender, education level, marital status, living with whom at home, and activity level ($p>0.05$). On the other hand, age is an important factor in the perception of aging, and the perception of aging steadily increases with age (KW= 8,084 $p<0.05$). In particular, individuals aged 75 and over have a higher perception of aging than those aged 60-64 ($p<0.01$). Occupation is important in the perception of aging, the perception of aging is higher in healthcare workers and agricultural workers than in others

(KW=15,595 $p<0.05$). The occupational groups with the lowest perception of aging are educators and technical staff. Perceived income level affects the perception of aging; those who describe their income as high have a higher perception of aging, followed by those who express their income as low. At the middle-income level, the perception of aging is the lowest (KW= 8,595 $p<0.01$), and there is a U-shaped relationship between the perceived income and the perception of aging (Table 3). This study showed a consistent relationship between personality traits and the perception of aging in older adults population.

The elderly were asked, "what do you think old age is?" and the correlation between the positive evaluation of old age and the perception of aging was found to be low ($p > 0.05$). The correlation between the negative assessment of old age and the perception of aging is a weak positive correlation in the sentence "old age is not being able to work and produce" ($r = .117$, $p < 0.05$). It is accepted that as the perception

of aging increases, productivity decreases. On the other hand, there is a weak correlation with the perception of aging in the sentences "old age is exclusion from the social sphere" ($r = -.139$, $p < 0.05$) and "old age is helplessness, hopelessness" ($r = -.237$, $p < 0.01$). As the perception of aging increases, negative approaches such as "exclusion from society and helplessness" are less accepted by older adults.

Table 4. Distribution of older adults *Satisfaction with Life Scale* scores according to their socio-demographic characteristics (N= 273)

Socio-demographic characteristics	Category	n	Aritm. mean \pm SD	Test value	p
Age	60-64	147	14,93 \pm 5,74	KW= 4,154	0.245
	65-69	75	15,64 \pm 6,32		
	70-74	36	16,61 \pm 7,79		
	75+	15	18,93 \pm 7,24		
Gender	Female	155	15,40 \pm 5,98	U= 8973.0 (Z= -.267)	0.790
	Male	118	15,79 \pm 6,77		
Education level	High school	65	16,14 \pm 6,25	KW= 2,358	0.502
	Associate Degree	47	14,28 \pm 5,49		
	License	134	15,85 \pm 6,50		
	Graduate	27	15,04 \pm 6,33		
Occupation† (worked or re-tired)	Education	116	14,27 \pm 6,11	KW= 16,255	0.023*
	Health	17	16,59 \pm 7,52		
	Social	35	17,49 \pm 6,81		
	Technical	41	15,07 \pm 5,84		
	Agricultural production	11	18,55 \pm 4,93		
	Security	5	17,20 \pm 3,90		
	Business owner	32	16,69 \pm 6,65		
	Didn't work	16	16,19 \pm 6,16		
	Marital status	Married	222		
Widowed / Divorced		42	15,26 \pm 6,49		
Single / never married		9	20,56 \pm 6,33		
People they live with	Lives alone	50	15,94 \pm 6,73	KW= 0,489	0.783
	Lives with a spouse	149	15,57 \pm 6,32		
	Lives with his spouse and children	74	15,30 \pm 6,15		
Perceived Income Level	Low	82	16,91 \pm 5,92	KW= 18,577	0.000**
	Middle	173	14,34 \pm 5,54		
	High	18	21,22 \pm 10,28		
Activity Level	Very active	20	15,60 \pm 10,18	KW= 13,940	0.003**
	Active	177	14,81 \pm 5,93		
	Very little active	67	17,16 \pm 5,71		
	Not active at all	9	18,56 \pm 5,36		

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

There was no significant relationship between life satisfaction and age, gender, education level, and who they live with at home ($p > 0.05$). However, the life satisfaction of those aged 75 and over was higher than the other age groups ($p < 0.02$). On the other hand, occupation is important in life satisfaction. Life satisfaction was higher among those working in agricultural production, social scientists, and those in the security field (KW=16,255 $p < 0.05$). The occupational group with the lowest life satisfaction is educators and technical staff. Marital status is related to life satisfaction (KW=5,923 $p < 0.05$), and life satisfaction is higher in single, never-married individuals than in married and widowed/divorced individuals. Especially single, never-married individuals responded more positively to the statement "my life is close to my ideals in many aspects" than the others. On the other

hand, the difference is insignificant in terms of "satisfaction with life". Life satisfaction of those with high and low perceived income levels is higher than those with medium income levels, and there is a U-shaped relationship (KW=18,577 $p < 0.001$). Life satisfaction is also the highest in those with high incomes. Life satisfaction decreases as the activity level increases (KW=13,940 $p < 0.01$). It is an important finding that life satisfaction is higher in those with very low activity levels and inactive ones. One of the reasons for this is that younger and active individuals gave lower scores than others in the sentences "my life is close to my ideals in many aspects" and "if I were born again, I would change almost nothing in my life". This can be explained by the fact that individuals become more fatalistic and accept their situation as they age. This study has shown a consistent relationship between

personality traits and life satisfaction in the elderly population.

In the study, individuals were asked "What do you think old age is?" and the correlation between the positive evaluation of old age and life satisfaction was found to be low in the sentence "old age is being tolerant" ($p > 0.05$). On the other hand, there is a weak non-linear relationship between life satisfaction and life satisfaction in the sentences "old age is self-realization" ($r = -.218$, $p < 0.01$), "old age is the happiest time of life" ($r = -.403$, $p < 0.01$) and "older adults is a wise person who is consulted" ($r = -.169$, $p < 0.01$). While the positive attitude scores of older adults regarding the perception of aging are higher, their life satisfaction is low. This result reveals that the relationship between the perception of old age and life satisfaction is not realized to the desired extent. The

correlation between life satisfaction and negative evaluation of old age, such as "old age is financial neediness" and "old age does not have too many responsibilities," was found to be low ($p > 0.05$). On the other hand, the correlation between life satisfaction and "old age is not being able to do what you want" ($r = .222$, $p < 0.01$), "old age is not being able to meet basic needs" ($r = .292$, $p < 0.01$), "old age is not being able to work and produce" ($r = .149$, $p < 0.01$), "old age is being excluded from the social sphere" ($r = .150$, $p < 0.01$), "feeling close to death" ($r = .265$, $p < 0.01$), "helplessness and hopelessness" ($r = .248$, $p < 0.01$), "feeling lonely" ($r = .356$, $p < 0.01$) and "deterioration of health" ($r = .186$, $p < 0.01$) are weak. This shows that as life satisfaction increases, contrary to expectations, older adults agree with all these negative situations.

Table 5. Regression Analysis results on perception of aging and affecting variables

Model		<u>Coefficients^a</u>		t	Sig.	
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients			
		B	Std. Error	β		
1	(Constant)	19,853	3,921		5,064	,000
	SWLS total	,139	,045	,182	3,083	,002
	Age	,186	,061	,182	3,078	,002

a. Dependent Variable: ELSA total

In the multivariate regression analysis, no significant relationship was found between gender, education level, marital status, occupation, income level, who lives with at home, physical activity level, and perception of aging ($p > 0.05$). On the other hand, there is a positive relationship between the perception of aging and life satisfaction and age. There is a statistically positive linear relationship between the perception of aging and life satisfaction ($t = 3,083$, $p < 0.002$) and between the perception of aging and age ($t = 3,078$, $p < 0.002$). In this study conducted on older adults, the regression model based on the correlation between the aging perception (y), life satisfaction (x_1), and age (x_2) variables was obtained as follows:

From the equation $Y_i = (b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2)$; it was found that

Perception of Aging = $19.853 + 0.139 \times \text{life satisfaction} + 0.186 \times \text{age}$. According to this model, it can be said that an increase of 0.139 in life satisfaction and 0.186 units in the age variable will cause a one-unit increase in the perception of aging. Accordingly, regression analysis revealed that age and life satisfaction are important determinants of aging perception.

4. DISCUSSION

This article examines how demographic variables and life events experienced during the aging process may affect the relationship between the perception of aging and life satisfaction. In our country, no study has been found that directly addresses the relationship between the perception of aging and life satisfaction in older adults. Therefore, comparisons were made with studies conducted in other countries.

Perception of Ageing: In this study, age, occupation, and perceived income level was associated with the perception of aging. On the other hand, gender, education level, marital status, living with whom at home, and activity level were not significantly related to the perception of aging ($p < 0.05$). According to Moser et al. (2011), the perception of aging was not related to gender, age, and education level. In contrast, low income, living alone, chronic medical conditions, and depressed emotions were associated with negative perceptions of aging. The effect of gender on the perceptions of bodily aging is less clear.

There was no difference in the perception of aging between men and women in the study. Mohammadpour et al. (2018) obtained similar results in their study. In the study conducted in China by Liu et al. (2020), it was found that there was no difference in the perceptions of aging of both genders, and the average age of perception of aging was approximately 70 years. The study by Liu et al. (2020) showed that the perception of aging develops earlier in Chinese with low education levels. In addition, the same study concluded that widows are more likely to consider themselves older than married ones. Choi et al. (2014) found no relationship between education level and perceptions of aging. In this study, individuals with a high level of education reached the perception of aging at advanced ages; in other words, they felt old at an older age. The average age of perception of aging is about 73 years and is higher than in China. The study concluded that there was no significant difference between marital status and the probability of individuals seeing themselves as older. It can be argued that the perception of aging stems from the cultural struc-

ture and internalization of aging stereotypes in society.

In a study conducted by Santini et al. (2019) in Ireland, it was found that the male gender, low education level, unemployment, and living in rural areas were associated with negative perceptions of aging. In parallel, the study reported that people who live socially isolated, lonely, and exposed to more social pressure and less social support have more negative perceptions of aging. Camboim et al. (2017) found that participants who reported aging as a negative experience generally reported worse perceived health than those who said aging as a positive experience. Robertson and Kenny (2016) estimated that negative perceptions of aging are associated with decreased social participation. Individuals with a positive perception of aging are high likely to engage in cognitive and social activities.

In this study, perceived income level was associated with the perception of aging. In a study conducted in Iran by Yaghoobzadeh et al. (2018), it was found that life satisfaction and socioeconomic status have a very weak and non-significant positive effect on the perception of aging. In their study, Sadeh Moghadam et al. (2016) found that socioeconomic status directly impacts the perception of aging, similar to the results of the study. These results show that older adults with negative perceptions are more likely to be frail, therefore, advancing age, economic inadequacy, less social support and less social participation increase the perception of aging. It can be said that people who are not satisfied with their health will have more negative attitudes towards their own aging processes and this will lead to a worse quality of life. On the other hand, it can be said that the individual's positive attitudes towards his own aging will affect the subjective physical health positively. In this respect, it is important for the individual to take into account their own aging attitudes in order to lead a healthy life.

Life Satisfaction: In this study, no significant relationship was found between life satisfaction and age, gender, education level, and with whom they live at home ($p < 0.05$). On the other hand, it was found that life satisfaction increased as income increased, and life satisfaction was higher in single, never-married individuals than in married and widowed/divorced individuals. Similarly, life satisfaction is higher among those working in agricultural production, social scientists, and those working in the security field than among other occupational groups. However, it is seen that life satisfaction is low in those who are very active and active.

In the study by Smith et al. (1999), similar results were obtained regarding life satisfaction. Some researchers suggest an age-related decline in life satisfaction in the oldest group (Lim et al., 2016). Some studies show that older age predicts an increase in life satisfaction (Gaymu & Springer, 2010; Stone et al., 2010), but some researchers suggest that life satisfaction peaks at age 65 and then declines (Mroczek & Spiro, 2005). Many studies have found a U-shaped relationship between age and life satisfaction; in other words, young and older adults are more satisfied with life than middle-aged people (Frey & Stutzer, 2002; Dolan et al., 2008; Kutubaeva, 2019). Gwozdz and

Sousa-Poza (2010) observed a U-shaped relationship but drew attention to a sharp decline in life satisfaction after 65 years. Mroczek and Spiro (2005) found that life satisfaction increased over the years, peaking at age 65 and then decreasing.

This study found no significant difference between education level and life satisfaction. In the study conducted by Chan et al. (2019), it was seen that people with advanced age and lower education levels had higher life satisfaction.

In the present study, it was observed that there is a significant relationship between perceived income and life satisfaction, and life satisfaction is relatively high in low and exceptionally high-income groups. Studies conducted by Cid et al. (2007) and Wallace (2008) have also determined that income positively affects the life satisfaction of older adults.

The study found no difference between men and women regarding life satisfaction. It is also noteworthy that most studies showing significant differences between men and women in life satisfaction gave small effect sizes (Geerling & Diener 2019). Graham and Chattopadhyay (2013) found that women generally report higher levels of life satisfaction than men and that the gender gap in life satisfaction (in favor of women) is more significant in wealthier countries and the older, more educated, and married groups.

In this study, no difference was found between the life satisfaction of married and divorced people, whereas those who lived alone and never married were found to have higher life satisfaction. Gove et al. (1983) found that the general life satisfaction of married men was higher than that of married women. Takashi (2011) points out a closer relationship between family ties and life satisfaction for women, while men show lower life satisfaction after divorce or widowhood. According to Joshanloo and Jovanovic (2020) and Inglehart (2002), older men report higher levels of life satisfaction than older women. This is partly explained by the findings that older women are at higher risk for health problems, are widowed, and have lower financial resources. McCamish-Svensson et al. (1999) found that social support, satisfaction with friends (communication with children, siblings, friends, number of close friends, and satisfaction with friends), and health (need for help and personal health assessment) were strongly associated with life satisfaction. Similarly, Ho et al. (1995) also found that physical function and social support were associated with life satisfaction (Hillera's et al., 2001). In this study, however, it is seen that there is a weak inverse relationship between perceived social support and life satisfaction, and the research findings do not support the literature.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Despite current research, interventions to support positive attitudes toward aging and older people are lacking. Understanding what makes life more comfortable for the elderly and what needs to be given to them to lead active, complete, and happy lives is an important social concern. Therefore, opportunities exist to develop interventions and educational initiatives to support positive views on aging.

To analyze life satisfaction, especially in old age, the effect of social relations, namely the frequency and quality of communication with relatives, friends, and acquaintances, can be discussed in more detail in the next step. Better integration into social networks can promote social activity and a sense of responsibility towards others, creating positive emotions in older people. This review and comment, therefore, add to the current research in a narrower scope in defining self-perceptions and stereotypes of aging differently, as well as their implications and potential options for promoting positive outlooks on aging.

Understanding the concept perception of aging and its determinants may increase older adults' satisfaction with aging and their adaptation to age-related changes. Still, it should be taken into account that many individuals, social and cultural factors are involved in this perception, and the fact that these factors are affected by aging varies according to society. In addition, this concept needs to be subjected to further research in different cultures to ensure the effectiveness of programs and measures to support older adults. Given the cognitive nature of perceptions of aging, further qualitative research in this area may be recommended to identify other possible dimensions.

It would be helpful to explore specific cultural norms that may explain gender differences in life satisfaction and examine whether men and women have different definitions of the good life and/or other comparison standards when assessing their lives.

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