

SELF DETERMINATION THEORY AMONG SENIOR CITIZEN: A REVIEW PAPER

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ABSTRACT

This article overviews self-determination theory (SDT) relates to wellbeing of senior citizens. The important terminologies and concept pertaining self-determination theory are broadly reviewed. Self-determination theory (SDT) conceptualizes basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness as innate and essential for ongoing psychological growth, internalization, and well-being. Despite a widespread concern with the well-being of elderly people, very little is known about the motivation behind every day behaviours in old age. Malaysia officially became an ageing country in 2020 with the percentage of its population aged 65 and above hitting 7.5% (about 2.4

million of the total population). Malaysia is predicted to be an aged society by 2044, when those aged 65 and above make up 14% of the population. Ageing issues might not look like a remarkably interesting phenomenon for the young and healthy. Suggestions are made for further research and for potential applications.

Keywords: self-determination theory, competence, autonomy, relatedness, senior citizen

INTRODUCTION

Aging has become a difficulty for scientists and researchers from all fields in modern society. The modern psychological ageing paradigm, presented by P. Baltes and refined by researchers all over the world, claims that older adults and persons have great inherent potentials and resources in all mental domains, from health to cognitive, personality, and social capacities.

World Health Organization (2021) mentioned that by 2050, two billion people will be 60 or older. The elderly's health is becoming increasingly vital as the world's population ages (World Health Organization, 2017). The demographic transition will have far-reaching consequences. Everyone, regardless of age, has the right to health, which is a core goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015). Good health encompasses a person's mental and social well-being as well as the absence of illness or infirmity (World Health Organization, 1946). Both of these qualities are included in a healthy lifestyle.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ageing Population in Malaysia

By year 2044, Malaysia will become aged society with 14 per cent of its populations aged 65 and above and continue to increase to 20 per cent as super-aged society by the year 2056. (David, 2022). Even by worldwide standards, Malaysia's ageing rate was increasing quite quickly and alarming especially government to take proactive action and encounter this situation. Governments, lawmakers, and healthcare professionals cannot be the only ones to address the challenge of ageing populations. Everyone who has or will have an elderly family member or loved one in their life is affected by it. Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye said in Yusof (2019), since elderly parents may be abandoned by their children, research into loneliness and other mental health concerns among the elderly is necessary since this could affect their emotional wellness, lead to depression, and eventually cause senility or dementia.

The need of elderly persons to feel included and productive was one of the key concepts in descriptors of good ageing (Draper & Fenton, 2014). One of the best theories explaining this situation is self-determination theory (SDT).

Self Determination Theory Among Senior Citizen

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a theory of human motivation developed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2008) that links personality, human motivation, and optimal functioning. It proposes that there are two main types of motivation which are intrinsic and extrinsic which are powerful forces in shaping how people behave. Deci and Ryan (1985) state that extrinsic motivation is a drive to behave in certain ways based on external factors such as grading system, awards, employee evaluations and other factors. While intrinsic motivation are internal drives that encourage people to behave in a certain way which are core value, interest, personal sense of morality.

Legault (2017) stated that self-determination theory (SDT) is a broad theory of human personality and motivation concerned with how the individual interacts with and depends on the social environment. SDT explains how intrinsic and extrinsic outlines how motivations influence situational responses in social, cognitive development and personality. SDT also explains the impact of the social and culture in Finally, SDT describes the critical impact of the social and cultural context in accelerating human's basic psychological needs, perceived sense of self-direction, performance, and well-being (Legault, 2017).

Having self-determination means people have an ability to make decisions and choices to manage their own life. Kendra (2021) states that having self-determination will allow people to feel that they have control over their lives. Other than that, having self-determination has an impact on motivation which is people feel more motivated to take any actions especially when they feel that what they are doing is having an impact on their lives.

According to Ferrand, Martinent and Durmaz (2014) an older person continues to live longer and they focus attention on increasing longevity without disabilities, and focus on new approaches to aging well. Older people want to age in their own home (Löfqvist et al., 2013). However Angelini and Laferrere (2012) and Fernández-Carro (2012) noted changes in lifestyles among the elderly from eighty years and older. There is a growing number of elderly people leaving their own homes to be in public or private residential homes to adjust with their situation such as having walking difficulties, health problems, deaths of partners and others.

Deci & Ryan (2012) identify three innate psychological needs for growth and personal well-being that influence self-determination. First, autonomy with feelings of being volitional, having choice, and demonstrating responsibility. Second, competence with feelings of empowerment and the ability to achieve goals; and the third characteristic is relatedness with feelings of being understood, cared for, and valued by significant others. Hence, all these characteristics is significant to self-determination theory.

Components of SDT

Competence refers to a person's ability to drive his or her own path, manage his or her own life, and serve as a catalyst for change. According to Josefsson et al. (2013), personality maturity is a multidimensional attribute made up of a number of qualities, one of which is the ability to self-organize. According to studies on personality maturity, this attribute improves with age (Sharma, 2017). Competence refers to a person's ability to direct his or her own life, to be the source of action, and to regulate his or her own existence. This component is strongly related to the phenomena of personality maturity, which was created by L. Golovey and her colleagues. Personality maturity is a complicated trait that includes a number of characteristics, one of which is the ability to self-organize. Personality maturity appears to increase with age, according to empirical research.

Ericson, up to present conceptions (including gerotranscendence theory), has recognized autonomy as an essential component of adult growth (Verbraak, 2000). Autonomy is a psychological construct that gauges a person's ability to establish his or her own set of values and goals, and it is linked to motivation and maturity. While independence is the most popular meaning of autonomy, it can also refer to freedom from something or someone, freedom for something, or freedom from stereotypes, depending on the researcher's perspective. In some ways, autonomy "matures" with age; we may become less reliant on the opinions of others. However, data imply that age is not the most essential element in stereotype independence (for example, locus of control, temperament, and anxiety) (Sargent-Cox & Anstey, 2014). In some ways, autonomy "matures" with age, and we can become less reliant on the opinions of others. When it comes to stereotype freedom, however, data suggest that age may not be the most crucial factor.

Relatedness refers to social interactions and influences, as well as the ability to form and sustain meaningful relationships with others and receive emotional support and understanding from others. The findings of socioemotional selectivity theory suggest that ageing affects an adult's social and emotional domain, yet it's a common misperception that a reduction in social relationships inevitably leads to loneliness (Carstensen et al., 2003). Ageing modifies an adult's social and emotional world, however it's a frequent misconception that a decline in contacts with ageing always entails loneliness (Carstensen, LL, Isaacowitz, DM, Charles, ST;1999, 2000).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this paper, we demonstrated a review of some of the research that has been conducted in self-determination theory and also the components under it.

Ageing populations and average life expectancy have both increased throughout time (National Institute of Aging, Global health and aging. WHO, US National Institute of Aging, 2011). Diseases and disability associated with ageing

have spread throughout the world, placing additional strain on society and public resource. On the other side, some people might not have the ability or self-control to regulate their own well-being. Therefore, understanding crucial personal traits and self-determined characteristics is critical to support good ageing and uphold wellbeing. According to the self-determination hypothesis, people can only thrive in the context of healthy ageing when their basic psychological needs are satisfied. Nevertheless, encouraging healthy ageing in the elderly is not without its challenges.

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