

Active aging with leisure and free time activities for a better quality of life.

Envejecimiento activo con las actividades de ocio y tiempo libre para una mayor calidad de vida

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Abstract. The objective of this research was to study the relationship between the participation of the elderly in learning programs in cultural activities developed in senior centers. The research was quantitative, cross-sectional and relational; a probabilistic sample was applied to select 340 elderly people over 65 years of age, corresponding to a senior center in Madrid. The instrument used to collect information consisted of 20 questions grouped into 4 dimensions. The results indicate that the elderly are satisfied with the new cultural learning offered by the senior centers. 72% of the people surveyed, contribute to improve learning through these activities. The research provides possible improvements to prevent loneliness, improving the quality of life. It is suggested to improve the learning programs in cultural activities to achieve greater participation in society. This research suggests possible improvements in areas that will help prevent dependency, such as those where there is greater demand from users. Specific plans to increase the participation of men in the workshops held in the senior centers are suggested as suggestions for improvement.

Keywords: Active ageing; free time; life expectancy; leisure; permanent education

Resumen. El objetivo de esta investigación fue estudiar la relación entre la participación de los mayores en programas de aprendizaje en actividades culturales desarrolladas en centros de mayores. La investigación fue cuantitativa, transversal y relacional; se aplicó un muestreo probabilístico para seleccionar a 340 personas mayores de 65 años, correspondientes a un centro de mayores de Madrid. El instrumento utilizado para recoger la información consistió en 20 preguntas agrupadas en 4 dimensiones. Los resultados indican que los mayores están satisfechos con los nuevos aprendizajes culturales que ofrecen los centros de mayores. El 72% de los encuestados, contribuyen a mejorar el aprendizaje a través de estas actividades. La investigación aporta posibles mejoras para prevenir la soledad, mejorando la calidad de vida. Se sugiere mejorar los programas de aprendizaje en actividades culturales para lograr una mayor participación en la sociedad. Esta investigación sugiere posibles mejoras en áreas que ayuden a prevenir la dependencia, como aquellas en las que existe una mayor demanda por parte de los usuarios. Como sugerencias de mejora se sugieren planes específicos para aumentar la participación de los hombres en los talleres que se realizan en los centros de mayores.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje, actividades culturales, aprendizaje, centros de mayores, envejecimiento activo

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Introduction

Increasing life expectancy is one of the hallmarks of the 21st century, reflected in the dramatic increase in the number of older people over the past two decades (United Nations [UN] 2020). According to statistics published by the UN in the Global Population Prospects 2019 report, by 2050, 16% of the world's population, or one in six, will be over 65 years old.

This is a representative increase from 2019, when 9%, or one in 11 people, were over 65. The UN likewise reports that by 2050 there will be 426 million people aged 80 or more; a representative increase from 143 million in 2019 (UN 2020). Along with international efforts to regulate the appearance of older people, there is likewise a growing number of international plans to ensure the appearance of older people and to address aging. These programs take into account what older adults see as elevated in semblance to affiliate goals with the beneficiaries horizons (Van Leeuwen et al., 2004; 2019).

Articles on life satisfaction were published in the 1960s. From the 1970s onwards, the concept of quality of life was born; by the end of the 1980s, the concept of subjective

happiness had taken hold (Fernandez 2009). At the same time, the idea that these concepts are related to the process of active aging has evolved and gives new meaning to the understanding of these two concepts. In the 1990s, the World Health Organization (WHO) introduced a basic definition that understood the concept as "the process of enhancing opportunities for health, participation and security to improve the quality of life as people age." (2002, 12) However, we should not forget the contribution of the famous Jacques Delors report (1996, 40). At the same time, other governmental and NGO initiatives provide a policy framework that emphasizes the link between activity, health, independence and healthy aging. Given its undisputed importance as a central policy concept, attempts to add empirical evidence to its definition and performance criteria have not been sufficient. The World Health Organization (2015, 5) recently began defining active aging as: Agile aging in the grouping requires political, social and cultural improvement; veteran investment in social decision, pensions and vitality systems; and veteran enthusiasm to originate a better type of career, emancipation and vitality in older adults (Duitrache et al., 2017). In Latin America and the Caribbean, countries like Argentina, Mexico, Costa

Rica, and Uruguay are considering implementing older focused arrangements in the areas of vitality, legislation, chore, and social advocacy. These countries put great packaging on healthy aging and vitality in indeterminate to get a better type of career through policies and programs. Pressured aging requires the improvement of the corporation in political, social and cultural aspects; a veteran investment in social morale, pensions and sanitation systems; and a veteran guard of activities that promote a better series of events, freedom and sanitation in older adults (Duitrache et al. 2017). In Latin America and the Caribbean, countries such as Argentina, Mexico, Costa Rica and Uruguay have begun to expert the implementation of agreements in the areas of sanitation, legislation, chore and social morality, focused on older adults. These countries give great gravity to lush aging and sanitation in general, the equanimous is to grant a better jaez of happenings through policies and programs.

In Europe, the conceptualization (NoRAE) lization of pressurized aging contains the notion that deteriorating implies, more than the welcome of the dysfunctions and alterations associated with aging, the optimization of the potentialities and hand of increase and personal growth (Flores-Tena, 2023). International and Spanish institutions demand the implementation of policies, initiatives and programs that improve the health and gift to the giving of succession, allowing pressurized aging to be maintained and implemented as a routine (Caprara et al. 2013). Active aging in society requires political, social and cultural progress; greater investment in social security, pensions and health systems; and more activities that contribute to a better quality of life, autonomy and health of older people (Duitrache et al., 2017). In Latin America and the Caribbean, countries such as Argentina, Mexico, Costa Rica and Uruguay have begun to evaluate the implementation of agreements in the areas of health, legislation, labor market and social protection, with a particular focus on older people. These countries place great emphasis on healthy aging and overall health to ensure a better quality of life through policies and programs. In Europe, the term active aging encompasses the idea that aging involves, rather than accepts, the dysfunctions and changes associated with aging, Optimizing the potential and opportunities for growth and personal development (Flores-Tena, et al 2018). So much so that recent research maintains that neuromuscular deterioration, plus a sedentary lifestyle, increases the risk of muscle loss, affecting health. More specifically, to the functional status of older people (Castro et al., 2019). International and Spanish institutions encourage the implementation of policies, initiatives and programs that improve health and well-being throughout life, so that active aging options can be maintained and implemented as a routine (Caprara et al., 2013). For this objective to be a reality, it is necessary to plan actions around active aging for older people that address physical activity to promote personal, psychological and physiological development. (Castañeda-Lechuga et al., 2020).

Sociocultural animation is a pedagogical practice that aims to promote people's integration and active participation in their search for social development and a better quality of life (Perez et al. 2020). Chavero-Tapia (2020) refers to four basic pillars of human education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to join and learning to be; shows that they must be effectively included in the educational environment so that education can develop positively in people. Leisure as a social and cultural element in this development is not new and in turn contributes to the formation of certain habits, lifestyles, different ways of understanding about the development of leisure and recreation from a personal, social and economic point of view. new action. Lima, A. et al. (2021) and Breheny and Stephens (2017) note that active recreation creates the healthy aging expectations necessary for active aging. It also seems important to create emotional bonds through different projects that satisfy the curiosity to learn and create relationships between them (Mérida-Serrano, et al. 2018, 329). In particular, activities in geriatric centers favor play and movement approaches as a horizontal axis of participant integration for better physical fitness, motor skills, sedentary lifestyle prevention and mental health (Padial-Ruz et al., 2016; 2019; 396). De hecho, la detección precoz del deterioro de estas capacidades serviría como predictor de estados de fragilidad (De frutos et al., 2022; Navalón & Martínez, 2022). Currently, older people play a greater social role thanks to their integration into the environment in which they live. Aging is an irreversibly defined condition, a natural process for every living being (Zieliński, 2015), and each individual ages differently (Bruno and Alemán, 2016). It is important to consider aging not only from a psychosocial perspective. A biological perspective (Fernández, 2011). In senior centers, it is believed that many older women are afraid to speak up or explain their way of thinking because they are so easily trapped in the routines, routines and stereotypes of traditional social mores. Another major problem that single elderly women face in terms of free time is that they do not know how to spend their free time (Gu, 2018).

About relationships Perceptions of Aging and Longevity Evidence suggests that positive perceptions, attitudes, and thoughts of older adults extend their lifespan (De Haro et al., 2015). Conversely, discrimination based on perceived age tends to lead to dissatisfaction and unhealthy consequences among older adults (Fernández et al., 2017). For the above reasons, the following research questions and hypotheses are proposed to facilitate exploration of the relationship between active aging activities and satisfaction in older adults: How often do older adults participate in recreational activities designed to promote active aging? What are their favorite aging activities? What is the overall satisfaction level of elderly people involved in elderly activities? The following research hypotheses are also proposed: Hypothesis 1. There is a relationship between active

aging activities and satisfaction in older adults. Hypothesis 2: Men and women experience different levels of satisfaction. Therefore, the main purpose of this article is to examine the relationship between the frequency with which older adults participate in active aging programs and their satisfaction with the experience.

Theoretical framework

The challenge facing society today, for the elderly, is to offer multiple activities so that the elderly remain active in society and are not lonely or excluded from society (Hernandez 2009).

In recent times, there have been several activities for the quality of life; understood as encompassing different levels to visualize and understand the needs of the person in the economic, social, psychological; up to the level of routine. In addition, it is involved in the perception that the person has of himself before society and how he interacts with others (Bairero, 2017). The quality of leisure and free time, offered by senior centers, gives a welfare to determine approximations of the changes that have the routines of life; it is required that older people improve living conditions, memory and learning, as well as socializing with other people. In 2017, the II International Congress "Active aging, quality of life and gender" was held; aging is a challenge for everyone, for society being essential to have a positive vision of aging. (Limón and Chalfoun 2017) that can be achieved through education and social participation (Fernández et al. 2017). In the centers, games or group dynamics are used as a technique to increase motivation, inhibiting the influence of other negative factors regarding health status or age. (Rosa et al., 2022).

The elderly are the protagonists of today's society, having new experiences to different changes and opportunities to develop (Escotorin and Roche 2011 pp.18).

Materials and Methodology

Study design

To achieve the objective, a quantitative study was established and questions grouped into six dimensions were collected during the months of October 2022. A descriptive analysis of the variables involved and a correlational study using statistical tests were used, being non-parametric for the comparison of groups. The sample consisted of 340 elderly people (30% men, 245; 70% women, 105), from a senior citizens' center in Madrid. The age of the elderly people was from 65 years onwards up to 75 years. It was applied during one hour, all participants collaborated voluntarily, guaranteeing the anonymity of their answers. After collecting the data, we proceeded to code the data and order them to carry out the statistical procedure.

Results

Table 1. Shows that The frequency of activities at the center is as follows: 60% attend the center daily; while 30%

attend once a week, and 10% once a month.

Table 1. Frequency of attendance at the senior center

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
Daily	204	60	30.1	30.1
Once a week	82	30	30.5	92.4
Once a month	74	10	7.6	100.0
Total	340	100.0	100.0	

The activities proposed in the senior center promote active aging, being the 70%.

Table 2. Satisfaction with the schedule of activities

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Accumulated Percentage
More or less satisfied	1	.1	.1	.1
Highly satisfied	238	70	70	70
Very satisfied	71	30	30	100.0
Total	340	100.0	100.0	

As can be seen in Table 3, the seniors are quite satisfied (86.3%), which indicates that people are very satisfied with the activity programs that are planned and organized so that the seniors can enjoy their free time.

Table 3. Degree of satisfaction with activities

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Accumulated Percentage
More or less satisfied	38	2.4	3.4	3.4
Highly satisfied	242	86.3	85.3	88.6
Very satisfied	60	11.3	11.4	100.0
Total	340	100.0	100.0	

The participation in the activities proposed to promote quality of life shows that participation is very high.

Table 4. Contingency table, frequency of activity and activity in which older adults participate

Participation Frequency	Activity					Total
	Celebrations	Conferences	Dance	Excursions	Trips	
Nothing	0	5	0	0	0	3
A little	0	0	0	19	100	35
Regular	75	25	67	157	94	70
Quite	35	3	60	63	0	230
A lot	230	0	0	2	0	2
Total	340	33	127	241	194	340

Table 5 shows the following the frequency of participation of older adults in promotional activities and the satisfaction that older adults have, there was a positive Spearman correlation, with a bilateral significance of $p= 0.036$, which confirms the research hypothesis that the greater the participation, the greater the degree of satisfaction that older adults receive.

Table 5. Correlation between activity frequency and degree of satisfaction.

Activity frequency	Correlation coefficient	Satisfaction degree
		.073*
	Sig. (bilateral)	.036
	N	340

* The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (bilateral)

Significant differences between women and men are analyzed; in the table ... we present the results of the Mann Whitney U test, with the asymptotic bilateral significance $p= 0.653$ ($>p= 0.05$), indicating that there are no differences between the two; the null hypothesis of the research is approved with the results obtained.

Table 6.

Differences between of satisfaction and gender

	Degree of satisfaction
Mann-Whitney U test	74448,500
Z	-,653
Asymptotic significance (bilateral)	,539

All the results that have been obtained respond to the analysis of the two hypotheses on the frequency of participation of the elderly, satisfaction with the activities carried out; while it was proven that satisfaction does not depend on gender, therefore, the second hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The activities used in the centers are of great variety, and obtain greater satisfaction among the people, allowing to organize new dynamics for people with new demands. Although participation is equal in both genders, women are more participative when starting an activity Pinzón et al. (2017). Implementing new strategies and dynamics to achieve greater initiative in men is convenient to give benefits such as feeling motivated when performing an activity. The older adults who participated in the study showed interest in several of the activities, being the excursion activities and celebrations the ones that generated the greatest satisfaction. Fernandez (2011) reported that in Spain, the majority of older adults perceived aging in a positive way by engaging in activities related to sharing with peers and family members. Intergenerational participation of other people is understood as the enjoyment that older adults experience in activities, evidenced by the frequency of scheduled activities.

According to Fernandez's study (2011), 80% of older adults who participated in active aging programs reported being satisfied with their friendships and family relationships, and 90% of them felt secure with those around them. This is consistent with the ideas of Abellán and Esparza (2009), who stated that the aging process should not be seen as a problem but as a challenge for everyone, including the aging person and society as a whole.

Urquijo and colleagues (2008) concluded that older adults with personality styles characterized by lower quality of life than those who use active, cognitive and behavioral coping strategies, as well as those who explore alternative courses of action to overcome life's challenges.

When it comes to meeting other people's needs, preservation, accommodation and protection they are often cautious, reserved and do not intend to actively intervene in events. According to Urquijo et al. this study identified a high frequency of older people participating in activities promoted in senior centers (2008), which predicts a better

quality of life and positive coping.

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Conclusions

This study was conducted between January and April of this year, during the Covid-19 pandemic, which serves as a limitation for any comparison with other studies. Recall that the sample was provided for convenience only. In light of these shortcomings, the study findings should be considered.

Overall, the study provided an answer to both the overall objective and the research questions. The study focused on the opinion of older adults through a questionnaire that provided various evaluations of the activities carried out in senior centers, as well as through individual perceptions of the quality of services. The same is true of the care they receive from specialists. In terms of active aging, it has been found that participation in workshops improves the sense of self, strengthens family ties and increases the network of new social contacts. In this context, "physical activity (PA) has gained importance in the process of preventing premature aging, reducing the factors associated with metabolic pathologies, favoring the improvement of the quality of life (QoL) of individuals" (Castellanos-Vega & Cobo-Mejía, 2023).

Social and emotional enhancement Abellán A. with Esparza C. (2009). Spanish views on various topics of aging and the elderly; ranging from competencies related to active ageing to concern for the development of quality of life, which represented a common concern of agencies and specialized professionals (Flores-Tena, 2019)

Regarding the participation of older adults in the activities programmed in the senior centers as part of the active aging programs, a regular participation of male subjects was observed. In general, we can indicate that the senior centers have improved their service, however, we are aware that more favorable results can still be obtained, so we consider

it important to guarantee the necessary opportunities and spaces for the enjoyment of leisure activities that take into account the interests of men, which would guarantee a complete service that promotes satisfaction, motivation and learning in both men and women.

Regarding the participation of older adults in the activities planned at the geriatric center within the active aging program, the regular participation of male subjects was observed. In general, the geriatric centers can say that their services have improved, but we believe it is important to provide the necessary space and recreational opportunities because we know that better results can be achieved. We guarantee a complete service that promotes satisfaction, motivation and learning for both men and women. As indicated by Vázquez et al. (2023), in short, more innovative strategies must be designed that include physical activity in the community to improve the quality of life and guarantee active aging of older people in today's society.

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