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Factors Related to Successful Aging among Older Adults in Da Nang, Vietnam

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Abstract

Successful aging is a significant phenomenon for achieving a healthy and happy life of all elderly in this aged and aging society. There are several factors associated with successful aging. However, it is understudied regarding this important topic in Vietnamese context. Therefore, the authors would like to deeply explore about this issue.

This study aimed to explore the relationships among age, perceived health status, perceived self-efficacy, social support and successful aging among older adults in Da Nang, Vietnam. Descriptive correlational design was applied into this study. One hundred and ninety three older adults aged 60 years old and over who lived in Da Nang City Vietnam were recruited through the multistage random sampling technique. Instruments used in this study consisted of the Demographic questionnaire, the Self-Rated Health (SRH), the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), and the Successful Aging Inventory (SAI). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Spearman's Rho, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

The results of this study revealed that the mean score for successful aging was 67.59 ($SD = 8.07$). Successful aging were related significantly and positively to perceived health status, social support, and perceived self-efficacy ($r = .391$, $r = .270$, $r = .236$ [$p < .001$], respectively) whereas age was significantly and negatively related to successful aging ($r = -.227$, $p < .001$). Nursing intervention study design is recommended for further research to promote and enhance successful ageing among older adults in Vietnam.

Keywords: Successful Aging, Older Adults

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Introduction

Population aging is a global phenomenon affecting both developed and developing countries. World Health Organization (2007) estimated that there were 600 million people aged 60 and this will increase to 1.2 billion by 2025 and 2 billion by 2050. The aging of Vietnam's population is also accelerating. Approximately 9.45 % of Vietnamese were aged 60 and over in 2007, and it is estimated this percentage will account for 28.5 % by 2050 with a high level in ASEAN, after Singapore (39.8 %), and Thailand (29.8 %) (United Nations, 2007). With increasing life expectancy and superannuation, the older adults desire a successful aging. Even though life expectancy is increasing, healthy life expectancy is not increasing as much. Additionally, chronic diseases associated with aging can impact on the ability of the older adults to function independently (Linton & Lach, 2007). Successful aging can be defined as "an individual's perception of a favorable outcome in adapting to the cumulative physiologic and functional alterations associated with the passage of time, while experiencing spiritual connectedness, and a sense of meaning and purpose in life" (Flood, 2002, p 105). Successful aging is a concept in which an old person and the people around him or her can reach a state of utmost physical, functional, mental, and spiritual factors, all of which are vital components (Touhy & Kathleen, 2014).

Perceived successful aging was measured as individual's perception of his or her aging, life satisfaction, wellbeing, satisfaction with the ability to achieve personally valued goals, low morbidity, mortality, and longevity (Flood, 2002). Specially, by comparison of effects on mortality in older adults respectively of successful aging and normal aging, the Cox regression model showed an increased risk of

mortality in subjects with normal aging ($r^2 = 1.9$; $p = .003$) adjusted by age ($r^2 = 1.1$; $p < .001$) and by sex ($r^2 = 1.9$; $p = .002$). The overall mortality rate was 41% and the rate was significantly lower among successful than normal agers ($p = .001$) (Camozzato, Godinho, & Fagundes, 2014). From literature review, successful aging are influenced by various factors including perceived health status, perceived self-efficacy and social support. There have been some studies about successful aging of older adults and factors affecting it, but those studies were conducted the context of Western countries which were considered different from Vietnam. Although factors related to successful ageing had been widely discussed in the literature, formal study on this issue in Vietnam is limited. It is necessary to ascertain the relationships between those factors and successful aging in Vietnamese context. The results may lead to proper nursing intervention for enhancing successful aging in Vietnamese older adults in the near future.

Research purpose

This research aimed to identify relationships between age, perceived health status, perceived self-efficacy, social support and successful aging among older adults in Da Nang, Vietnam.

Methods

This study used a descriptive correlational design. G*Power 3.1.9.2 program is used to calculate sample size (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). One hundred ninety three older adults who lived in Da Nang City were recruited through the multi-stage random sampling technique to participate in this study. The researcher conducted through individual interview for 45 minutes.

Participants

Population in this study was the older adults who lived in Da Nang City, Vietnam. The eligibility criteria included as follow: 1) is 60 years old and over, 2) is able to communicate and read well in Vietnamese, 3) have no cognitive impairments as investigated by Mini Mental State Examination, 4) have stable health conditions at least 1 month before data collection which allow them to participate into the whole study, and 5) is willing to participate in the study.

Ethical considerations

This study has been approved by the IRB of the Faculty of Nursing, Burapha University (No. 10-06-2558, July20, 2015) and the permission from the head of primary health care center of each commune in Da Nang, Vietnam was obtained. In order to obtain consent form, the researcher firstly contacted each individual and explained the purpose, method and data collection, and requested the participant to sign a consent form. The participant can withdraw from the study, as well as confidentiality was presented.

Data collection

In this study, questionnaires were used to collect older adult opinions self-reports questionnaire were comprised of five parts as followings:

(i) The Demographic questionnaire included age, gender, marital status, living condition, and co-morbidity.

(ii) The SRH was used to measure general perceived health status of older adults. It was developed by Stanford Patient Education Research Center (Lorig, et al., 1996), and consisted of 1 item with 1-5 Likert scale for asking participants to rate their general health as poor, fair, good, very good, or excellent. A higher score indicates poorer health. Test-Retest Reliability was at .92. (Lorig, et al., 1996).

(iii) The GSE was developed by Schwartz and Jerusalem (1995). It consists of 10 items to measure the belief that one can perform tasks, or cope with a variety of difficult demands in life and be rated on a 4-point rating scale (from 1 = not at all true, to exactly true = 4). Cronbach's alphas ranged from .76 to .90 (Schwartz & Jerusalem, 1995).

(iv) The MSPSS was developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, and Farley (1988) and translated into Vietnamese language by Huyen (2011). The MSPSS was used to measure the perceived social support from the following three sources: family, friends and significant others. Score of this instrument ranged from 1 (very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree). Huyen (2011) reported reliability of this MSPSS at .74, whereas Cheng and Chan (2004) reported internal consistency coefficients for the three subscales at .69 for significant others, .78 for family, and .76 for friends

(v) The SAI was developed by Troutman, Nies, and Bentley (2011a) which was used to measure successful aging consisting of 20-items. Items were rated on a 4-point Likert scale (from 0 = hardly ever/ strongly disagree, to almost always/strongly agree = 4). The reliability of this instrument with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .86 (Troutman, Nies, Small, & Bates, 2011b).

All original English instruments were translated into Vietnamese using the back-translation method (Cha, Kim, & Erlen, 2007). Data were collected during June to August, 2015 with 193 older adults living in 3 communes: Thuan Phuoc, Hoa Khanh Nam, and Hoa Phong in Da Nang City, Vietnam. They were selected through multistage random sampling from 7 districts.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the SPSS 17.0 statistical software program. Spearman's rho

Correlation test was used to identify the relationship between perceived health status and successful aging. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to explore the relationship between age, perceive self-efficacy, social support, and successful aging among older adults.

Results

The results revealed that the majority of participants were female (54.4 %) with average age of 73.24 years (SD = 8.37). They had secondary school level (31.60%). Most of them (69.90) live with their families. Their monthly average income was 4,093,330

Viet Nam Don (SD = 1,307,670). The majority (80.8%) had co- morbidity. Of these, 51.80 % had hypertension.

There were positive and negative relationships between successful aging and related factors as shown in table 1

Table 1: Correlation between related factors and successful aging (n = 193)

Related factors	Successful aging (r / r_s)
Perceived health status	.391 ^{s**}
Social support	.270 ^{p**}
Perceived self-efficacy	.236 ^{p**}
Age	-.227 ^{p**}

** $p < .001$, ^p Pearson Product Moment Correlation test; ^s Spearman's rho Correlation test.

Discussion

The result of this study showed that perceived health status positively significantly correlated with successful aging among older adults ($r = .391, p < .001$). It could be explained that good perceived health status is very important for individual such as reduced risk of mortal (Wilkins, 2003), disability (Mendes de Leon, Glass, & Berkman, 2003), better cognitive health (Engelhardt, Buber, Skirbekkk, & Prskawetz, 2010). Not a good health but it is perception, individual feel easier to be able to cope with the changes that have occurred to their body as they have aged and to deal with their aging and promote successful aging (Flood, 2005). Even though most of participants have co-morbidity such as hypertension (51.8%), diabetes

mellitus (13.5%), and COPD (5.7%), chronic diseases may be controlled and manageable by themselves thought health promotion activities, dietary adherence, symptom monitoring, and all preventive health practices, were significantly linked to successful aging (Riegel et al., 2009). This finding is consistent with those of Kim (2013); Meng and D'Arcy (2013), which asserted that perceived health status was found to be an important variable on successful ageing among older adults.

Social support statistically significant and positive correlated with successful aging among older adults ($r = .270, p < .001$). One possible explanation is that Vietnamese culture and tradition encourages young

family members to care for older people, especially their parents, till death (Quynh&Thao, 2005). It is noticed that approximately 69.9 % of participants in this study lived with their family. Additionally, social support influences the older adults of motivation for successful aging that increased their self-confident, life satisfaction, well-being, satisfaction with the ability to achieve personal valued goals, low morbidity, mortality, longevity and is likely one of the mechanisms that has a direct impact on changing health promoting behavior and outcome and achieving successful aging (Flood, 2005). The result of this study was similar to previous studies by Cha, Seo and Sok (2012); Narang et al., (2013) and Kim (2013) which found that social support was significantly related to successful aging among older adults.

Perceived self-efficacy statistically significant and positive related to successful aging among older adults ($r = .236, p < .001$). It could be explained by following theory. According to theory of successful aging, the more perceived self-efficacy meant that the greater the personal control, creativity, confident, the more the individual had more knowledge, experience to be able to cope with the changes that have occurred to their bodies as they have aged and to deal with their aging. The more perceived self-efficacy, the easier older adults cope with life events, to come up with solutions to problems and also enjoy doing creative new things or making things to promote successful aging (Flood, 2005). High perceived self-efficacy contributes to happiness and satisfied with life, perform positive behaviors to good outcomes, makes one more willing to face challenges, and balance emotional, decrease stress and is one of the factors contribute to successful aging (Frisch, 2006). The results of this study was similar to an outcome of previous studies by Cha et al. (2012) and Kim (2013) which found that perceived self-

efficacy was significantly related to success among older adults.

Age statistically negative and significant correlated with successful aging among older adults ($r = -.227, p < .001$). The average age of this study was 73.24 (SD = 8.37) and approximately 25.6 % of participants were old-old (80 -89 years). With increasing age, people are less successful aging because of numerous age-related changes such as neuromuscular and cardiac homeostatic mechanism, physical frailty, immobility and reduced functional capacity and contribution of disease (Miller, 2009). Furthermore, the samples in this study had co-morbidity such as hypertension , diabetes mellitus, and COPD. Perceived those changes, older adults seemed to be less successful aging. They think that their bodies is not strong enough to perform the successful aging, physical health, physical mobility (Linton &Lach, 2007) and their limitation lead to decrease successful aging. The result of this study was similar to those previous studies of Meng and D'Arcy (2013); Arias-Merino et al. (2012) which found that age was one of the factors related to successful aging.

Conclusion

Perceived health status, self-efficacy, social supports, and age were confirmed as the major factors related to successful aging among older adults in Da Nang, Vietnam. It meant that older adults in Da Nang, Vietnam, have achieved successful aging when they received the necessary support during older age, based on individual perceived health status, self-efficacy in one's own abilities, and attaining self-satisfaction with one's life.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, nurses can utilize the results of this study to promote older adults

regarding perceived health status, perceived self-efficacy in their ability to perform their specific task or behavior successfully. Social support should be concerned and be increased particularly support from family members to promote successful aging of older adult in Vietnam. Nursing intervention programs in regard to perceived health status, self-efficacy, social support are recommended for improving and enhancing successful aging of older adults.

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