



Satisfaction Level of Older People with the Services in the Geriatric Center in Kirkuk City: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract:

Background and aim: Life satisfaction is an assessment of a person's subjective well-being based on their level of happiness and quality of life. Keeping older people happy can boost their confidence, alleviate feelings of loneliness, and reduce their worries. The aim of this study was to evaluate the satisfaction of older people with the services provided in the geriatric center in Kirkuk City and to identify associated factors.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional design was conducted in the geriatric center at Kirkuk City among elderly people aged 60 years and older from December 10, 2023 to March 5, 2024 at the Kirkuk City Geriatric Center. Purposive sampling was conducted to select 25 elderly people. Interview-based structured questionnaires were used to collect the data. Data entry and analysis were performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 26). Data were reported as frequency and percentage, and for categorical variables the chi-square test or Fisher's exact test was used. The significance level for statistical analysis was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Of the 25 older people interviewed in this study, 20 (80%) were male and 5 (20%) were female. Most of the elderly 21 (84%) were satisfied with the services provided at the center, while some of them 4 (16%) were dissatisfied. The study discovered a relationship between satisfaction level and age ($p = 0.001$), gender ($p < 0.001$), education level ($p < 0.001$) and smoking status ($p = 0.031$).

Conclusions: The satisfaction of older people with the services of the geriatric center in Kirkuk city was relatively satisfactory. This highlights the need for an established program to improve service delivery in retirement homes, with serious consideration of the needs and priorities of older people.

Key words: Satisfaction level, Elderly people, Services, Geriatric center, Kirkuk City.

Introduction:

People's life expectancy has increased recently due to better nutrition and overall health. As a result, the proportion of older people is growing every day [1]. According to Al Saady and Ridha [2] Iraq's aging population is expected to grow steadily and reach 4,700,000 by 2050. Seniors require a lot of care and support due to their reduced functional abilities and increasing frailty [3].

A person's subjective well-being based on their level of happiness and quality of life is expressed through life satisfaction [4]. Satisfaction is a complex issue that depends on a variety of objective and subjective factors, such as sociodemographic factors, emotional state, physical health, social support and cognitive abilities [5]. Older people, especially those living in nursing homes, face a variety of problems; These include increased needs for medical care, therapy, rehabilitation, welfare and social assistance, as well as feelings of isolation and social exclusion [6]. Therefore, to satisfy the care of older people in nursing homes, services must respect their dignity, protect their rights and legitimate interests, address their numerous and urgent needs, and improve their quality of life [7]. According to a Turkish study, older people who lived in a family environment showed higher levels of life satisfaction than those who lived in nursing homes [8]. Seniors may feel more supported and cared for when they are satisfied with senior care facilities, which can increase their confidence, reduce feelings of loneliness, and ease worries [9].

Assessing the satisfaction of older people with services can improve the quality of life and the quality and quantity of services provided in the center for the elderly. To the best of our knowledge, apart from a few studies on the satisfaction of older people in Iraq [2, 10, 11], this is the first study to evaluate the satisfaction of older people in the city of Kirkuk. Therefore, assessing the satisfaction level of elderly people in the geriatric center in Kirkuk city and determining related factors is expected to fill this gap in the literature.

Materials and Methods:

Study Design and setting: This cross-sectional survey was conducted at the Geriatric Center in Kirkuk City to assess the satisfaction of older people with the services provided at the center from December 10, 2023 to March 5, 2024. Kirkuk is 148 miles (238 kilometers) north of Baghdad. has 1,483,788 inhabitants [12]. According to the Kirkuk Directorate of Social Special Needs, there was only one center for the elderly, where a total of 25 elderly people lived.

Sample Size and Sampling: The total number of elderly people in the geriatric center in Kirkuk city was only 25, of which 20 were men and only 5 were women. The study included older people aged ≥ 60 years, while those with severe cognitive disorders were excluded. All residents of the center were included (25 older adults) once it was ensured that they met the eligibility criteria. The study used a purposive, non-probability-based sample [13].

Tools and Instruments: To collect data, the researchers designed an interview-based structured questionnaire that included two sections. The first section covered socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, education level, length of stay in the center and type of employment before admission. Smoking status, walking exercise, and medical conditions were also addressed. In the second section, questions about the satisfaction of older people were asked using 12 items. To measure older people's satisfaction with the services of a geriatric center, the items were rated using the five-point Likert scale: very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied, and very satisfied. The highest scores (5, 4, 3, 2 and 1) represented the highest level of satisfaction among older people [9]. To define the level of satisfaction, (MS = mean score, RS = relative sufficiency) was adopted, and the cutoff score for satisfaction of older respondents was 2. The level of satisfaction was considered satisfied if the scores were ≥ 3 and as dissatisfied if they were < 3 . The reliability of the questionnaire was high with a test-retest value of 0.86. The content validity of the questionnaire was assessed by a panel of more than ten specialists.

Ethical Considerations: The study had been approved by the Ethics Committee of the College of Nursing/University of Kirkuk. The Kirkuk Directorate of Social Special Needs gave the researchers formal permission to carry out the study. Before data collection, each elderly gave their verbal consent.

Statistical analysis: Using SPSS 26, descriptive statistics were employed to describe the sample. The categorical variables were expressed as percentages (%) and the continuous data were

presented as mean $\pm$ standard deviation. The influence of basic factors on satisfaction level was examined using Chi-square/Fisher's exact test.

Results:

Of the 25 older people interviewed in this study, 20 (80%) were male and 5 (20%) were female. The majority of participants were between 60 and 69 years old 17 (68%), with a mean age of 69.44 ± 5.71 years. 19 (76%) were illiterate and 12 (48%) were unemployed (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of certain sociodemographic profiles for the study sample (n = 25)

Variables	n	(%)
Age (Years)		
60-69	17	(68.0)
70-79	5	(20.0)
≥ 80	3	(12.0)
Mean (SD) 69.44 ± 5.71		
Gender		
Male	20	(80.0)
Female	5	(20.0)
Educational level		
Illiterate	19	(76.0)
Read and write	1	(4.0)
Primary school	1	(4.0)
Intermediate school	1	(4.0)
Secondary school	3	(12.0)
Type of job prior entering to the center		
Governmental job	2	(8.0)
Free or private job	8	(32.0)
Jobless	12	(48.0)
Retired	3	(12.0)

Data were presented as number (n) and percentage (%) for discrete variables and as mean $\pm$ standard deviation (SD) for continuous variables.

Most of the elderly 21 (84%) were satisfied with the services provided at the center, while some of them 4 (16%) were dissatisfied. The study discovered a relationship between satisfaction level and age ($p = 0.001$), gender ($p < 0.001$), education level ($p < 0.001$) and smoking status ($p = 0.031$) (Table 2).

Table 2. Association between sociodemographic, lifestyle characteristics and health status of older people (n = 25) and satisfaction level

Variables	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	P value
	n = 4 (16%)	n= 21 (84%)	
Age (Years)			
60-69	0	17 (68%)	0.001*
70-79	1 (4%)	4 (16%)	
≥80	3 (12%)	0	
Gender			
Male	0	20 (80%)	< 0.001*
Female	4 (16%)	1 (4%)	
Marital status			
Single	0	3 (12%)	1.000*
Divorced	0	2 (8%)	
Widowed	4 (16%)	16 (64%)	
Educational level			
Illiterate	0	19 (76%)	< 0.001*
Read and write	1 (4%)	0	
Primary school	0	1 (4%)	
Intermediate school	0	1 (4%)	
Secondary school	3 (12%)	0	
Duration of stay at the center			
Less than one year	2 (8%)	3 (12%)	0.173*
1-3 years	1 (4%)	15 (60%)	
More than three years	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	
I cannot remember	0	1 (4%)	
Type of job prior entering to the center			
Governmental	0	2 (8%)	0.222*

Free or private job	0	8 (32%)	
Jobless	4 (16%)	8 (32%)	
Retired	0	3 (12%)	

Smoking status			
Current smoker	2 (8%)	18 (72%)	0.031*
Former smoker	2 (8%)	0	
Never smoker	0	3 (12%)	
Practice walking			
Never	0	4 (16%)	0.742*
Sometimes	4 (16%)	14 (56%)	
Always	0	3 (12%)	
Having medical conditions			
Present	4 (16%)	17 (68%)	1.000*
Absent	0	4 (16%)	

*Fisher exact test; the p-value was considered significant at $p < 0.05$

Discussion:

The aim of the study was to assess the satisfaction of older people with the services provided at the Geriatric Center in Kirkuk City and to identify the contributing factors. The results showed that more than three quarters of the seniors living in the center rated the geriatric center's services as satisfactory overall. The present results were somewhat consistent with previous studies conducted in different countries. For example, 50.6% of Egyptian seniors living in retirement homes expressed satisfaction [14], more than 60% in China [7], and 64% in Erbil, Iraq [11]. In contrast to the present results, older people reported low levels of satisfaction (unsatisfactory level) in Poland (42.8%) [6], and in Indonesia (66.7%) [5]. There are several possible explanations for the observed discrepancies in results, including sampling, regional, and institutional differences.

The current study found a statistically significant relationship between age and satisfaction levels and found that people between the ages of 60 and 69 showed higher levels of satisfaction overall than people in other age groups, meaning that their satisfaction decreases as they age. These results were supported by several studies [6,15]. Al Saady and Ridha [2] also discovered a significant association with age, but their results suggested that satisfaction improved with age. However, other studies found no relationship between age and satisfaction [4,7].

The present results showed that participants' satisfaction was influenced by gender, with men being more satisfied with the services than women. In line with these findings, a Chinese study came to the conclusion that the satisfaction rate of men is significantly higher than that of women. This could be because women's emotional stays are more complex, delicate, sensitive, and vulnerable to

external influences involving accommodation, meals, medical staff, and other matters [7]. In contrast, other studies showed no association [4, 5,15]. Marital status was not a significant predictor of satisfaction levels, this was supported by the results of Khalifa and Atiyah [10]. On the other hand, the Iranian study contradicted current findings that married seniors had higher levels of satisfaction [3]. According to the results, the level of education also influenced the satisfaction of older people. In this study, older illiterate adults showed higher levels of satisfaction, which may be due to their lower expectations of the center compared to their more educated counterparts. Older adults with higher levels of education are more knowledgeable about individual rights and therefore expect the center to meet more needs. Two studies in the literature reached the same results [2,3]. In line with the results of the Polish study by Trybusińska and Saracen [6], no relationship was found between the satisfaction of older people and the length of stay in the center. A non- significant association was found between pre-center employment and satisfaction; This is consistent with the research of Supratman and Priambodo [5].

A significant relationship was found between smoking status and satisfaction. These results were confirmed by another study, in which researchers found that good health habits, such as avoiding alcohol and tobacco, have a positive impact on life satisfaction [15]. Practicing center walking as a primary type of physical activity did not have a significant impact on the satisfaction of older people, contrary to the Indian study that showed a relationship between them [15]. In contrast to the study results by Odetola et al [16], the current results showed no relationship between the presence of health problems and the level of satisfaction in the center, although, despite increasing age, the complaints worsened and affected organ function, which psychologically and physically affects seniors and makes them dissatisfied with life. Limitations of the study include that the results cannot be generalized to all senior residents in Kirkuk due to the small size of

the center's research sample. In addition, the inability of the cross-sectional design to simplify the assessment of cause and effect is another limitation in research.

Conclusions:

The majority of elderly people at the Geriatric Center in Kirkuk City were satisfied with the services provided. Age, gender, education level and smoking status were some of the elements that tended to impact satisfaction. Older people in nursing homes are satisfied when their needs are met, their autonomy is respected and their quality of life is strengthened. Therefore, underlines the need for an established program to improve service delivery in retirement homes, with serious consideration of the needs and priorities of older people.

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