

Needs Analysis for Spiritual-Oriented Psycho-Education Practices in Elderly Care

Yaşlı Bakımında Manevi Yönelimli Psiko-Eğitim Uygulamaları için İhtiyaç
Analizi

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Özet

Hem dünyada hem de ülkemizde her geçen gün yaşlı bakımına verilen önem artmakta ve bu konuda yeni yaklaşımlar ortaya atılmaktadır. Yaşlıların daha mutlu bir yaşam sürmelerine destek olmayı amaçlayan bu yaklaşımlar, kurumlar ve akademik dünya tarafından önemsenmektedir. Çalışmanın amacı ise huzurevi yaşlılarının manevi ihtiyaçlarını alanyazın taraması, gözlemler ve ikili görüşmeler yoluyla tespit etmektir. Bu amaçla öncelikle alanyazında yaşlı bakımında maneviyat ile ilişkili kaynak taraması yapılmış; ardından etik kurul izni ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığından kurumsal izin alınarak Sinop, Konya ve Kastamonu Huzurevlerinde yaşlılar gözlenmiş; daha sonra ise bu yaşlılar arasından 24 (12 kadın, 12 erkek) kişi ile ikili görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada keşifsel desen ve fenomenolojik araştırma yöntemi benimsenmiş yaşlıların manevî gereksinimlerini tespit etmede konuyla ilgili olabilecek çalışmalar gözden geçirilmiştir. Diğer yandan hazırlanan mülakat soruları ile veriler toplanmış ve bunlar kategoriler haline getirilmiştir. Gözlem aşamasında ise üç ay huzurevi yaşlılarıyla birlikte zaman geçirilerek veri toplanmıştır. Bütün bunlardan elde edilen veriler birbiriyle koordineli bir şekilde incelenmiştir. Bu üç teknikten yararlanılarak huzurevi yaşlılarının manevi ihtiyaçlarının temelde 13 tema üzerinde yoğunlaştığı tespit edilmiştir: Niyet, töbe, aşkın yanımız maneviyat, pozitif düşünme, sevgi, şükür, sabır, tevekkül, affetme, tek başınalık, barış, bilgelik, mutluluk.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yaşlı Bakımı, Huzurevi, Maneviyat, Psiko-eğitim, 322
İhtiyaç Analizi.

Abstract¹²

In the world and Türkiye, elderly care's importance is increasing day by day and new approaches are suggested. Those, aiming to support elders to live happier life, are valued by institutions and the academic world. The purpose of the study is to determine the spiritual needs of nursing home elders through literature review, observations, and bilateral interviews. Literature on spirituality in elderly care was searched; with ethical committee permission and institutional permission from the Ministry of Social Services, those were observed in nursing homes in Sinop, Konya and Kastamonu cities; bilateral interviews were held with 24 people. Exploratory design and phenomenological research method were followed up and several

¹ This study was produced from the author's PhD Dissertation: Dağcı, Abdullah. *Huzurevi Yaşlılarının Manevi Gereksinimlerinin Belirlenmesi ve Değer Odaklı Manevi Bakım Programının Umud, Psikolojik İyi Oluş ve Tanrı Algısı Düzeyleri Üzerindeki Etkililiğinin Değerlendirilmesi*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 2020.

² Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Alt Etik Kurulu, Tarih: 03/12/2018 tarih ve 13/179 sayılı karar ile etik kurul belgesi alınmıştır.

techniques were used to determine the elders' spiritual needs. Studies relating to the subject were examined thorough literature review. Also, data were collected through interview questions and categorized. In the observation phase, data was collected by spending time in the nursing homes for three months. Data obtained from all were examined in coordination with each other. With those techniques, it has been determined that elders' spiritual needs in nursing homes are concentrated on 13 topics: Intention, towbah, transcendental side "spirituality", positive thinking, love, shukr, sabr, tawakkul, forgiveness, loneliness, peace, wisdom, happiness.

Keywords: *Elderly Care, Nursing Home, Spirituality, Psycho-education, Needs Analysis.*

Extended Summary

The aim of the research is to determine the spiritual needs of the elders living in nursing homes. In this research conducted on nursing home elderly people, it was preferred the phenomenological research method, and it was determined the spiritual needs of nursing home elders by which various techniques. In this context, literature review, observation and bilateral interview techniques had played a leading role to determine the spiritual needs of the elders. First, the literature review was conducted regarding spirituality in elderly care. Next, with ethics committee approval and institutional permission, the elders were observed in Sinop, Konya and Kastamonu Nursing Homes. Then, bilateral interviews were held with 24 (12 women, 12 men) among them. By using the techniques above, it has been determined that the spiritual needs of nursing home elderly people focus on 13 topics: intention, towbah, spirituality as transcendental, positive thinking, love, shukr, sabr, tawakkul, forgiveness, loneliness, peace, wisdom, happiness.

323

It was concluded that the negativities in old age that negatively affect their ego and personality. Besides instead of talking about their goals, older people focus more on negative thoughts about the past. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding intention. Also, it was determined that they feel remorse, have death anxiety and are withdrawn. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding towbah. In addition, it was defined that an indication that they have a deep sense of helplessness, feel as excluded from social life. Also changing roles and physical problems have affected their psychological health. In fact, when such problems occurred, spirituality -a part of individual's self-development- acts as a coping factor. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding spirituality.

It was figured out that they have negative thoughts about the present and the past, feelings associated with depression, are dissatisfied with life. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding positive thinking. Also, break in the bonds of love between the elders and their close relatives has causes negativities in their minds. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding love. Additionally, instead of thanking the God, elderly people negative thoughts leading to rebellion. They are not satisfied with their lives and are not grateful for what they have. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding shukr.

It was determined that elderly people are not patient with health problems and have very weak personalities. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding sabr (patience). In addition, they have pessimistic thoughts about the future and anxiety about being lack of. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding tawakkul. Besides the need for forgiveness is at its highest level in old age, there is a lack of attitude and behavior for forgiveness, and elders do not tend to forgive even though they have health problems. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding forgiveness.

It was concluded that they have adapting problems to new living conditions, are not used to retirement, and feel lonely in crowded environments. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding loneliness. Also, they are not at peace with themselves and prevent the existence of a peaceful environment because they isolate themselves. Also, a negative self-perception and angry attitude prevent themselves to be peaceful. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding peace. Additionally, they were not able to adapt to old age and old age problems. Also, they failed to develop a wise understanding of the meaning and purpose of life and were not able to get satisfaction from life. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding wisdom. Moreover, their perception relating with old age is negative, they have thoughts that prevent them from achieving self-integrity. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding happiness.

In this study, to obtain data, the phenomenological research method was followed as well as literature review, observation, and bilateral interview techniques. After obtaining the necessary permission, the research was carried out in the nursing homes in the centers of Sinop, Kastamonu and

Konya. Bilateral interviews were held with 24 elderly people that 12 women and 12 men. According to the study results, it was determined that the elders in nursing homes have basically needed spiritual support on 13 issues. Therefore, they have 13 spiritual needs that intention, towbah, transcendental side “spirituality”, positive thinking, love, shukr, sabr, tawakkul, forgiveness, loneliness, peace, wisdom, happiness. Preparing psychoeducation program to meet these needs and implementing the program may help to live a better quality of life for them.

Introduction

Academic studies nowadays have increased awareness of spirituality, a need of the individual. It is a necessity to benefit from spirituality, on the one hand, in applied sciences such as psychology and medicine, and on the other hand, in research areas for sensitive groups such as special education. For this reason, interest in spirituality-related research is increasing day by day.³ This situation has led to an increase in interdisciplinary studies and those studies have begun to occupy an important place in the academic circle. The results of the research have concluded that spirituality has a very important place in the needs hierarchy of individuals. Within the context, the aim of the research is to determine the spiritual needs of the elders living in nursing homes.

In recent years, research on the subject has focused on the disabled people, the elders, patients in hospitals and prisoners in jail, children in care and other disadvantaged groups. The results from the research concluded that not only benefit these groups and propose different perspectives to the scientific world, but also reveal what is the spiritual needs for these groups. Within the scope of this research, the concept of *spiritual needs* is as follows: “Needs that directly affect individuals' processes of both making sense of and interpreting their relationships with themselves, their environment and God, and which can be met by providing spiritual care contents”.

1. Method

In this research conducted on nursing home elderly people, it was preferred the phenomenological research method, and it was determined the spiritual needs of nursing home elders by which various techniques. In this context, literature review, observation and bilateral interview techniques had

³ Abdullah Dağcı, *Huzurevi Yaşlılarının Manevi Gereksinimlerinin Belirlenmesi ve Değer Odaklı Manevi Bakım Programının Umud, Psikolojik İyi Oluş ve Tanrı Algısı Düzeyleri Üzerindeki Etkililiğinin değerlendirilmesi* (Ankara Üniversitesi, Doktora Tezi, 2020), 2.

played a leading role to determine the spiritual needs of the elders. First, the literature review was conducted regarding spirituality in elderly care. Next, with ethics committee approval and institutional permission, the elders were observed in Sinop, Konya and Kastamonu Nursing Homes. Then, bilateral interviews were held with 24 (12 women, 12 men) among them. The data collected between 2018 and 2020.

2. Findings and Discussion

By using literature review, observation, and interview techniques, it has been determined that the spiritual needs of nursing home elderly people focus on 13 topics: intention, towbah, spirituality as transcendental, positive thinking, love, shukr, sabr, tawakkul, forgiveness, loneliness, peace, wisdom, happiness.

2.1. Intention

Intention refers to wanting to do something and planning and thinking in the mind. It is defined as the reason or purpose underlying a certain behavior⁴ that towards a certain goal.⁵ Also, intention is the concept of intending, deciding, turning one's heart towards something, knowing what is doing. In addition, it is the heart's directing towards an action that it finds appropriate for the purpose immediately or as a result, that is, the will to do something right before it is committed, and the heart's turning to the side that it believes will benefit at that moment or in the future.⁶ Participants stated that:

“What good will it be if the world is mine after this age? Because a half of bread that I can eat.” (A1, Women, 89), “Nothing makes me happy anymore.” (B7, Man, 72), I was very active in my youth, however I am not able to take a step now.” (A6, Women, 81).

These statements could be an indication that the negativities in old age that negatively affect their ego and personality. Besides instead of talking about their goals, older people focus more on negative thoughts about the past. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding intention.

⁴ Şükrü H. Akalın, *Türkçe Sözlük* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yay., 2005), “Niyet”, 1478.

⁵ Selçuk Budak, *Psikoloji Sözlüğü* (Ankara: Bilim Sanat Yay., 2009), “Niyet”, 515.

⁶ İbrahim K. Dönmez, “Niyet”, *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2007).

2.2. Towbah (Repentance)

Towbah means to return and put the clock back that an individual abandons things that should be avoided and turns towards things that are encouraged.⁷ This is necessary for complete towbah that (a) recognizing attitudes and behaviors that negatively affect both others and the individual himself/herself (b) forgiving himself/herself for mistakes (c) then in order to completely erase those, beneficial attitudes and behaviors must be do (d) should be adamant on to don't the same mistake to wipe out those. Participants stated that:

"There is nothing good about old age, I feel sad when I think of the previous days." (A5, Woman, 86), "I don't like old age at all, everything changes as we get older, we get one step closer to the grave." (A8, Man, 96), "I have washed myself hands of people." (A10, Man, 72)

These statements could be an indication that they feel remorse, have death anxiety and are withdrawn. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding towbah.

2.3. Spirituality

Spirituality includes things that cannot be seen with the eye but can be perceived through the senses. It is a feeling of deep belonging, wholeness, connectedness, and openness to infinity.⁸ Also it is awareness of a presence that transcending the external aspects of life, which gives a feeling of connectedness or unity with the universe.⁹ In other words, spirituality is the experience that arises from the awareness of a transcendent dimension and is a way of existence. And it is characterized by certain values regarding self, others, nature, life, and the eternal.¹⁰ Participants stated that:

"It has been many years since my wife passed away, he left me like this." (B1, Woman, 78), "They threw us aside, I'm like orphaned children." (B3, Woman, 79), "I have fallen into disrepair, I can't help anyone in the age." (A9, Man, 71)

These statements could be an indication that they have a deep sense of

⁷ Bekir Topaloğlu, "Tövbe", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2012).

⁸ Edward P. Shafranske - Richard L. Gorsuch, "Factors Associated with the Perception of Spirituality in Psychotherapy", *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* 16/2 (1984), 231-241.

⁹ Jane E. Myers vd., "The Wheel of Wellness Counseling for Wellness: A Mollistic Model for Treatment Planning", *Journal of Counseling & Development* 78/3 (2000), 251-266.

¹⁰ David N. Elkins vd., "Toward a Aumanistic-phenomenological Spirituality: Definition, Description, and Measurement", *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 28/4 (1988), 5-18.

helplessness, feel as excluded from social life. Also changing roles and physical problems have affected their psychological health. In fact, when such problems occurred, spirituality -a part of individual's self-development- acts as a coping factor. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding spirituality.

2.4. Positive thinking

Healthy aging is related to psychological and mental processes. Adapting to new roles during aging helps to view changes from a positive perspective.¹¹ Positive schemas support individuals in the coping process.¹² Therefore, successful aging is closely related to a positive outlook.¹³ In order to the aging process to be perceived and experienced as a healthy, active and positive experience, individuals not only must be physically, socially and spiritually well but also must be realize their potentials. In addition, it is necessary to provide the protection, safety, and care when they need. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding spirituality. Participants stated that:

"I don't want to remember the past. I feel unhappy when I think of past days." (A6, Women, 81), "Old age is only good if you have money, if you have money people will be around you." (B9, Man, 69), "There's nothing good aspect of old age, because you depend on others." (B2, Women, 74)

328

These statements could be an indication that they have negative thoughts about the present and the past, feelings related with depression, are dissatisfied with life. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding positive thinking.

2.5. Love

In old age that dominated by emotional disorders, people lose their sense of adulthood, and they are greatly affected by the death of their spouse. Leaving children from parents' home is another important factor that causes to lose love in the elders.¹⁴ Because love is an emotion that allows a person to connecting and attaching to someone or an entity.¹⁵ In all life periods, it is

¹¹ Ayşe Canatan, *Sosyal Yönleriyle Yaşlılık* (Ankara: Palme Yay., 2008), 136.

¹² Hızır Hacikeleşoğlu, "Pozitif Şemalar ile Tanrı Tasavvuru ve Dini Başa Çıkma Arasındaki İlişki Üzerine Bir Araştırma", *Hitit İlahiyat Dergisi* 22/1 (Haziran 2023), 73-102.

¹³ Velittin Kalınkara, *Temel Gerontoloji: Yaşlılık Bilimi* (Ankara: Nobel Yay., 2011), 26.

¹⁴ Naciye Akyıldız, *Sağlıklı Yaşlanma* (İstanbul: Yay-pa Yay., 1999), 8.

¹⁵ Abdullah Dağcı, "Huzurevi Yaşlılarında Sevgi: Manevi Başa Çıkma Bağlamında Bir Araştırma", *Türk Manevi Danışmanlık ve Rehberlik Dergisi* 2 (2020), 9-28; Abdullah Dağcı,

necessary the feeling. In old age, the will to live and strength durability gradually decreases due to physical and psychological decline. In the period in which there are many motional shocks, significant impairments occur, especially in the instinct of love. Participants stated that:

“I get very uneasy when I think about my children, neighbors and relatives. If I were at my home, my children would take good care of me, I would visit the neighbors, and all our relatives would come together during holidays. I would feel loved by them.” (A2, Women, 78), “We had a bad relationship with my oldest son. One day he came to visit with my little grandkids. When I saw my grandkids, conversation occurs between us. I asked my son to bring my grandkids more often, but he doesn’t do that. The world would be mine, if my grandkids came to me, kissed my hand as well as I gave them pocket money and caressed their heads.” (B8, Man, 74)

These statements could be an indication that the break in the bonds of love between the elders and their close relatives has causes negativities in their minds. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding love.

2.6. Shukr (Gratitude)

It is able to be stated that shukr is responding to good deeds done by God or other people, and associated with being aware of those. There are varieties of shukr made with the heart, tongue, and limbs. Since it is an element of spirituality shukr strengthens the bond with the Transcendent Being/God.¹⁶ Thanking the God is done by following the commandments, praising, and praying while thanking towards other people occurs by responding to good deeds with good deeds. Instead of complaining about what we have, being grateful contributes to a better personality.¹⁷ According to Koenig, one of the psychological and spiritual needs of elderly individuals is the need for gratitude.¹⁸ However, many elderly people, who are isolated from society as they get older and have more time to think, tend to complain instead of being thankful. Within the context, participants stated that:

“Yaşlılık Döneminde Manevi Bir Gereksinim Olarak Sevgi: Huzurevi Yaşlıları Üzerinde Bir Alan Araştırması”, *Çukurova Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi (ÇÜİFD)* 21/1 (2021), 1-25.

¹⁶ Figen Kasapoğlu, “Terapötik Süreçte Maneviyatın Değerlendirilmesi”, *Psikoterapi ve Psikolojik Danışmada Maneviyat* (Kaknüs Yay., 2017), 258.

¹⁷ Sıdika N. Parlak, “Manevi Danışmanlığın Gelişimi”, *Manevi Yönelimli Psikoterapi ve Psikolojik Danışma* (İstanbul: Kaknüs Yay., 2016), 39.

¹⁸ Harold G. Koenig, *Aging and God: Spiritual Pathways to Mental Health in Midlife and Late* (Pennsylvania/US: Haworth Pastoral Press/Haworth Pres., 1994).

“When a person gets older, he/she loses many things. We have difficulty even sitting down and standing up. How did I become like this? Now I’m waiting for God to take my life so that the unpleasant film can be end.” (B3, Women, 79), “I had neighbors and friends. Now I’m separated from all of them, I’m left alone. How did I end up here?” (A2, Women, 78), “You can’t live here, you greet someone, and you end up in debt. How can we find peace here, the name of this place is a nursing home but there is no peace.” (B1, Women, 78).

These statements could be an indication that instead of thanking the God, elderly people negative thoughts leading to rebellion. Also, they are not satisfied with their lives and are not grateful for what they have. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding shukr.

2.7. Sabr (Forbearance)

When a person is purified from his passions, he regains his health. Having a forbearing personality is one of the factors affecting recovery.¹⁹ A person faced many negativities throughout him/her life. Especially in old age, these negativities can cause complaints, however what needs to happen is that the elders should be more patient. It can be thought that older people will have a higher tolerance threshold, because they exposed to more negativities than young people. Within the context, participants stated that:

“Sometimes I use a wheelchair and sometimes a walking stick. My health does not allow me to walk around. When I think about this situation, I get very angry with myself. What was I, what have I become now?” (A1, Women, 89), “I’m old now, I can’t understand many things anymore. I can’t handle the bad words when I heard, I get offended immediately.” (B1, Women, 78), “Due to stress, a person, whose financial situation is not good, is get older. It’s very hard for me that my financial situation is not good.” (A7, Man, 73).

330

These statements could be an indication that elderly people are not patient with health problems and have very weak personalities. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding sabr (forbearance).

2.8. Tawakkul

In the aging process, surrendering to God gives people confidence.²⁰

¹⁹ Çağla Çelimli - Şeyma T. Güldal, “Manevî Yönelimli Danışmanlık ile Psikoterapi Yöntem ve Teknikleri: Doğu ve Batı’dan Örnekler”, *Manevî Yönelimli Psikoterapi ve Psikolojik Danışma* (İstanbul: Kaknüs Yay., 2016), 113.

²⁰ Philippe Hofman, *Yeni Bir Başlangıç: Emeklilik* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), 307.

Also trusting the Creator in the work done is also an indication of a positive bond with the Creator. This bond can be established if there is love for God. The belief in tawakkul is also associated with not accepting negative life facts. In addition, the imminence of death in old age can provide a suitable environment for questioning existence and reconnecting with religion. A person struggles as much as he/she can in the face of successive losses and the fear of death. Within the context, participants stated that:

“Last year I could walk, but this year I can’t walk without walking sticks. I’m so scared of what will happen next year.” (A3, Women, 77), “Old age diseases and not being able to get what I want make me very unhappy.” (A1, Women, 89), “If you don’t have financial situation, you will have a difficult life. What will I do tomorrow? Who will care me? Thinking about these questions, I got old and, I’m done.” (B12, Man, 97).

These statements could be an indication that they have pessimistic thoughts about the future and anxiety about being lack of. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding tawakkul.

2.9. Forgiveness

According to Koenig, forgiveness and being forgiven are among the psychological and spiritual needs of the elderly people regarding others.²¹ Forgiveness on a human scale means forgiving those who behave wrongly towards us, without holding a grudge. Individual who are exposed to evil and injustice reacts in certain ways. This may sometimes be in the form of tolerating, or it may be in the form of responding with the same or more. While forgiveness begins in the mind and is reflected in behavior, it supports both physical health and coping with problems that have negative effects on the body, such as stress. Problems in the interpersonal relationships of elderly individuals with family members and others may cause to lose the meaning and purpose of life. At this point, benefiting from spiritual concepts such as forgiveness and repentance affects their social relations and indirectly helps them find life meaningful.²² Within the context, participants stated that:

“Old age is a trouble, if you sit you can’t get up, if you want to go, you can’t go. May God damn those who put me in this situation. I deleted names of all my relatives from my notebook.” (B11, Man, 76), “There is no congenial person here, I talk to only a few people. I write off anyone who did me wrong

²¹ Koenig, *Aging and God*.

²² Sudeshna Basu Mukherjee, “Spirituality and Religion: Elderly’s Perception and Understanding”, *Indian Journal of Gerontology* 30/3 (2016), 336-354.

at the time.” (A8, Man, 96), “Current problems are very different from others. Our biggest problem now is health. God damn those who put me in this situation!” (B4, Women, 63).

These statements could be an indication that the need for forgiveness is at its highest level in old age, there is a lack of attitude and behavior for forgiveness, and elders do not tend to forgive even though they have health problems. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding forgiveness.

2.10. Loneliness

Loneliness, rather than the number of people interacting with each other, is a multidimensional phenomenon where the quality of interactions is more important.²³ Loneliness, as parallel to the loss of social ties, is the individual's perception of this situation as abandonment.²⁴ Traditional Turkish family structure has an important function in coping with loneliness.²⁵ However, there are differences in how loneliness is expressed at the cultural level. In Eastern societies, loneliness mostly evokes abandonment and loneliness while in Western societies, loneliness means being alone, individualization, and differentiation. Loneliness, one of the main situations experienced in old age, is affected by many factors such as health status, isolation from society, adaptation to new conditions, feeling of abandonment, and stress. Within the context, participants stated that:

332

“I came here when my wife passed away, she left, and I was burned out. I wouldn't want to be alone, but I have no choice.” (B12, Man, 97), “I retired when I realized I was getting old. I had many friends while I was working. But when I retired, I stayed away from all of them.” (A18, Man, 65), “I don't talk to anyone because my head can't handle noise. Of course, it's normal at this age. I also retreated into my shell, and I don't interfere with anyone.” (A9, Man, 71).

These statements could be an indication that they have adapting problems to new living conditions, are not used to retirement, and feel lonely in crowded environments. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding loneliness.

²³ Fatma Öz, *Sağlık Alanında Temel Kavramlar* (Ankara: Mattek Matbaacılık, 2010), 155.

²⁴ İsmail Tufan vd., “Türkiye’de Gerontoloji Atlası: Yaşlı Yoksulluğu ve Yalnızlık Üzerine Bulgular”, *Geriatrik Bilimler Dergisi* 2/1 (2019), 1-7.

²⁵ Tahir Dağcı, “Günümüz Ailesinde Değişim Alanları”, *Gelenek ve Modernite Arasına Sıkışmış Bir Kurum: Aile* (İstanbul: Kitap Dünyası Yayınları, 2022), 65.

2.11. Peace

Successful aging refers to a state of mental health such as having a positive outlook and self-understanding that will allow for optimal adaptation.²⁶ In order to successfully adapt to the retirement years, a person must learn his/her own abilities and must have the skills to gradually withdraw from work and spend their free time with rest, entertainment and games.²⁷ Peace, one of the factors that contribute positively to this process, includes living in harmony, having mutual understanding and being tolerant. The elders have left their families and social environment and come to a nursing home, which is a new and different environment that they may have difficulties adapting to the process. Because a new place also means new people and a new environment. At this point, choosing peace in attitudes and behaviors will contribute to easy adaptation to the process. Within the context, participants stated that:

“What should I do among these people? There are many people I don’t like those, when I see them my blood jumps to my brain.” (A10, Man, 72), “I don’t interfere with anyone, and no one should interfere with me.” (A5, Women, 86), I am very angry, but when I see a mistake, I take it to myself. It accumulates inside me, then explodes like a volcano. There are many people I have written off because of a small mistake.” (A12, Man, 81).

333

These statements could be an indication that they are not at peace with themselves and prevent the existence of a peaceful environment because they isolate themselves. Also, a negative self-perception and angry attitude prevent themselves to be peaceful. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding peace.

2.12. Wisdom

Wisdom not only is a perspective that the elders need to explain his/her own reality and give meaning to her life but also extends beyond what people learn through education.²⁸ It is an important characteristic to consist self-integrity in old age and to have a peaceful old age. Also, wisdom is the ability to use knowledge, experience, understanding, common sense and insight. It includes being balanced, reflecting what you know into your life, acting maturely and being moderate. It is thought that wisdom should increase with

²⁶ Canatan, *Sosyal Yönleriyle Yaşlılık*, 138.

²⁷ Veli Duyan vd., *Dünyü Bugünü Yarınyla İnsanı Anlamak* (İstanbul: Nar Yayınevi, 2014), 321.

²⁸ Jerry J. Bigner, *Individual and Family Development: A Life-Span Interdisciplinary Approach*: (New Jersey/USA: Prentice Hall, 1994), 477.

age, but it can be stated that most elderly people do not have any sign of wisdom. Within the context, participants stated that:

"I'm not as active as my previous times, we're getting old day by day." (B3, Women, 79), "Happiness is not for us. We climbed and climbed the mountain, now we are rolling down. We constantly lose things while rolling." (A1, Woman, 89), "I never had a life like I imagined, I came to today's after experiencing many disappointments." (B11, Man, 76).

These statements could be an indication that they were not able to adapt to old age and old age problems. Also, they failed to develop a wise understanding of the meaning and purpose of life and were not able to get satisfaction from life. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding wisdom.

2.13. Happiness

Old age is a period in which the individual queries his/her past times more frequently. If the individual has lived a satisfying life in the past, if he gets closer to his goals, wishes and ideals, he/she accepts the period more easily.²⁹ The concept of happiness is intertwined with many concepts such as life satisfaction and psychological well-being. For this reason, it has a complex structure with very wide boundaries. It is stated that situations such as being able to cope with problems, to make savings on one's own life, and to meet material-spiritual needs are some of the components of happiness. However, these situations are quite subjective. Within the context, participants stated that:

"How can an old person be patient? We have all kinds of diseases, troubles, and troubles. Old age is a pain in the neck." (A12, Man, 81), "K I wish I were in my twenties like when I married my wife. At that time, I didn't worry about anything, I was cheerful and happy. As if this world was mine. Now I'm suffering from those beautiful days." (A11, Man, 74), "After sixty you become old, happiness is no longer for you. You suffer from what you do throughout your life. That's what I do, I reap what I sow." (B3, Women, 79).

These statements could be an indication that their perception relating with old age is negative, they have thoughts that prevent them from achieving self-integrity. Therefore, it has been revealed that the elderly people have needs regarding happiness.

²⁹ Kalinkara, *Temel Gerontoloji*, 105.

Conclusion

Identifying the spiritual needs of the elders and studying to meet them can help to live a better quality of life. When society is considered as an organism, improving the vital elements of the elderly people that can be expressed as a limb of this organism benefits both the elders and all society. According to the literature review, no direct research has been found regarding the determination of the spiritual needs of the elders, although there are some studies on the elderly people in nursing homes. Within the context, the aim of the research is to determine the spiritual needs of the elders living in nursing homes.

In this study, to obtain data, the phenomenological research method was followed as well as literature review, observation, and bilateral interview techniques. After obtaining the necessary permission, the research was carried out in the nursing homes in the centers of Sinop, Kastamonu and Konya. Bilateral interviews were held with 24 elderly people that 12 women and 12 men. According to the study results, it was determined that the elders in nursing homes have basically needed spiritual support on 13 issues. Therefore, they have 13 spiritual needs that intention, towbah, transcendental as "spirituality", positive thinking, love, shukr, sabr, tawakkul, forgiveness, loneliness, peace, wisdom, happiness. Preparing psychoeducation program to meet these needs and implementing the program may help to live a better quality of life for them.

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