

Generative Behaviors and Psychological Well-Being in Mexican Elders

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Abstract : Since recent decades, the aging has been viewed from a more positive perspective, where is not only about losses and damage, but also about being on a stage where you can enjoy life and live with well-being and quality of life. The challenge to feel better is to find those resources that seniors have. For that reason, psychological well-being has shown interest in the study of the affect and life satisfaction (hedonic well-being), while from a more recent tradition, focus on the development of capabilities and the personal growth, considering both as the main indicators of the quality of life. A resource that can be used in the later age is generativity, which refers to the ability of older people to develop and grow through activities that contribute with the improvement of the context in which they live and participate. In this way the generative interest is understood as a favourable attitude that contribute to the common benefit while strengthening and enriching the social institutions, to ensure continuity between generations and social development. On the other hand, generative behavior, differentiating from generative interest, is the expression of that attitude reflected in activities that make a social contribution and a benefit for generations to come. Hence the purpose of the research was to test if there is an association between the generative behaviour type and the psychological well-being with their dimensions. For this reason 188 Mexican adults from 60 to 94 years old ($M = 69.78$), 67% women, 33% men, completed two instruments: The Ryff's Well-Being Scales to measure psychological well-being with 39 items with two dimensions (Hedonic and Eudaimonic well-being), and the Loyola's Generative Behaviors Scale, grouped in five categories: Knowledge transmitted to the next generation, things to be remember, creativity, be productive, contribution to the community, and responsibility of other people. In addition, the socio-demographic data sheet was tested, and self-reported health status. The results indicated that the psychological well-being and its dimensions were significantly associated with the presence of generative behavior, where the level of well-being was higher when the frequency of some generative behaviour excelled; finding that the behavior with greater psychological well-being ($M = 81.04$, $SD = 8.18$) was "things to be remembered"; while with greater hedonic well-being ($M = 73.39$, $SD = 12.19$) was the behavior "responsibility of other people"; and with greater Eudaimonic well-being ($M = 84.61$, $SD = 6.63$), was the behavior "things to be remembered". The most important findings highlight the importance of generative behaviors in adulthood, finding empirical evidence that the generativity in the last stage of life is associated with well-being. However, by finding differences in the types of generative behaviors at the level of well-being, is proposed the idea that generativity is not situated as an isolated construct, but needs other contextualized and related constructs that can simultaneously operate at different levels, taking into account the relationship between the environment and the individual, encompassing both the social and psychological dimension.

Keywords : eudaimonic well-being, generativity, hedonic well-being, Mexican elders, psychological well-being

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