



Case Study of Old Person of Pakistan: *This Desolation is My Life*

Muddsar Hameed

Department of Clinical Psychology, Shifa Tameer e Millat University, Islamabad, Pakistan

Email address:

Muddsarhameed41@gmail.com

To cite this article:

Muddsar Hameed. Case Study of Old Person of Pakistan: *This Desolation is My Life*. *Frontiers*. Vol. 3, No. 1, 2023, pp. 6-11.

doi: 10.11648/j.frontiers.20230301.12

Received: June 29, 2023; **Accepted:** July 18, 2023; **Published:** July 31, 2023

Abstract: This case study explores the life of an elderly person in Pakistan and their experiences living in an old age home. The study aims to understand the present and past of the individual, their philosophy of life, achievements, regrets, and the circumstances that led them to join the care facility. It also examines their physical, psychological, and emotional health, as well as the social and health problems faced by the elderly in Pakistan. The study uses qualitative techniques, including in-depth interviews and observations of the participant, who is a 70-year-old man residing in Najjat, an old age home in Pakistan. The study reveals that the participant had a challenging childhood, marked by his parents' divorce and separation from his siblings. He pursued higher education and had a successful career as an educator. However, personal and health issues, such as the loss of his wives and heart attacks, led him to retire and eventually join the old age home. The participant reflects on his philosophy of life, emphasizing the importance of inner happiness and finding purpose within oneself. While he expresses gratitude for his children's independence, he also regrets the strained relationship with his parents. The study highlights the psychological experiences of living in an old age home, including the cultural and economic factors that contribute to the participants' feelings of stress and failure. Cultural expectations regarding filial responsibility and societal judgment add to the emotional burden experienced by elderly individuals who are unable to live with their families. Economic stability is also a concern, with limited financial resources being allocated primarily to healthcare expenses. Overall, this case study sheds light on the life of an elderly person in Pakistan, their challenges, and the impact of societal and cultural factors on their well-being. It emphasizes the importance of addressing the social and health problems faced by the elderly population and promoting a more inclusive and supportive society for senior citizens.

Keywords: Psychological Experiences, Philosophy of Life, Senior Citizen

1. Introduction

Aging is a progression of cycles that start with life and proceeds for the duration of the existence cycle. It speaks to the end time frame in the life expectancy when the individual thinks back on life, lives on past achievements and starts to polish off his life course. Acclimating to the progressions that go with mature age necessitates that an individual is adaptable and grows new adapting abilities to adjust to the progressions that are normal to this time in their lives. As indicated by Pakistan's law, a senior resident is the person who is matured 60 years or more. In non-industrial nations like Pakistan actual impacts of maturing begins much prior because of elements including malnourishment, destitution, and upsetting educational encounters. This case study is

focused on the life of Pakistani old man, starting off from his birth to his old age and all about his life experiences. Learning was a major part of his adult life: from average beginnings he studied repeatedly to achieve his goals. It was posited that education was the potent force throughout the individual's development. The study, a life story, was underpinned by educational, psychological, mental wellbeing aspects.

2. Objectives

1. To study the present and past of person, philosophy of life, regrets, achievement of old person;
2. The circumstances of leaving home, experiences, and challenges to wellbeing before entering the care facility, coping with challenges, and decision to live

in a shelter home;

3. The analysis of physical, psychological and emotional, health;
4. To examine the social and health problems faced by the elderly&
5. To find out the attitude of the respondents towards life.

3. Methodology

This case study was conducted by qualitative technique. The client was interviewed through in depth and was observation during the session. The old person (male) was selected as a locale for the present study residing in Najjat (old age home).

Nijjat old age home:

Founded in 1992, it has served the community and continues to do so without any discrimination. It generates its resources from within the community. These include financial as well as human resources. To make it self-sustainable, the Najjat Trust has implemented such projects that not only meet the requirements of the community but also generate sufficient funds to satisfy the projects operating expenses. As a matter of policy, the Trust does not seek governments and other donor agencies financial support in the form of loans or grants. The objective of trust is to free the society from drugs, to care for the homeless elderly and disable people, to provide support to ensure basic education for every child, to provide direct help to people and support government institutions in natural disasters. Now in male old age home it has 20 old person and 4 staff members [1].

4. Identifying Information

I interviewed a man who is approaching to his 70th birthday. Mr XYZ was the youngest among his three siblings (one sister and one brother), who all grew up in a small town called Sarai Alamgir. His father divorced his mother before his seventh birthday. His father was an officer and his elder brother was also officer. He got early education from his town school then he went to Jamshoro University and got Master's degree in English literature and M. A Islamic studies. Later he joined as educationist. He married in 1975 after one and half his wife died. Then he remarried in 1978. He had two daughters and one son. He divorced his wife in 1992. His children left him alone. He spend fourteen year in army then he went to Saudi Arabia where he stayed next ten years. After coming back to Pakistan, he joined Sir Syed School Peshawar as an English teacher. After serving in different schools of Peshawar, he joined Nijjat old age in August 2017. Since then he has been living there.

5. Background

Childhood is era of life where we learn a lot it is first exposure of child with outside world. According to psychology whole personality of a person is developed

within first seven year of life. In this case Mr XYZ was born in middle class family. He spent his early fifteen year in his town Sarai Alamgir. Initial seven year of his life was full of happiness he is very social and naughty child he made a lot of friend. He has spent his childhood days in sport, cycling and others childish activities. He was very attached with his grandfather. His relationship with sibling was not good. Bonding between his parents was weak they both wasn't accept each. There were a lot of clashes between them that caused their children's separated from each other's [4].

When he was five year old his grandfather admitted him in school (he hasn't tell the name of school). As we know that men are an ambitious being every men and women has some ambition without ambition life became purpose less dull and boring. When he was nursery class student his childhood ambition was fly fast high in the sky like eagle his ambition was to become a pilot but later on he hasn't joined PAF. He was average student his favorites subject was literature, Islamic study and geography. When he was in grade 1st a downheartedness event occurred which left impact on his whole life that was his parents got divorced. Although his relations with parents was not good, but he had hope that am secure because I have my parents. He was naughty boy he was doing things that weren't acceptable for elder like throwing stones in Water Lake or kill little hens etc. so his mother saves him from others. During interview he said "*My childhood was spent into a state of depression after my parents divorced*" [2].

After divorced of his parents his sibling permanently separated from each other's he stayed with his grandfather his one uncle adopt his sister. His elder brother stayed with father in Rawalpindi. He passed his matriculation form his town school and then gets admission in government college Gujarat. After completion of his intermediate he decided to continue his education. He discussed this concern with grandfather. His grandfather wrote a letter to his friend who settled in Jamshoro. Then Mr Jamil moved to Jamshoro University for higher education. "*When I entered in train my grandfather said dear son I haven't guide you, your life will guide you himself stay blessed son and best of luck.*"

He got admission in English department of Jamshoro University. He participated in different curricular activities in university. He shared one interesting football match scenario with me "*I was average player of football during match captain of our team gave me position of goal keeper. Opponent hit the ball for goal ball hit on my eye and goal missed our team won that match and gave me best player award I haven't stop the goal lucky ball hit on my eye and goal missed.*" He hasn't shared any other past event or memory [3].

5.1. Family Life

Family life plays an important role in personality development. Mr Jamil spend first seven years with his parents and grandfather after divorced of his parents he stayed with grandfather till his intermediate after that he went to Jamshoro for higher education. He got married in 1971

with his collage daughter. She was a nice lady and he said we have good compatibility after one and half year his wife died because she was leukemia patient. He said *"Mostly people's hide truth I wasn't knows she is blood cancer patient."* In 1975 when he was posted in Quetta he sent a marriage proposal to his friend's sister she accepted. His second marriage was also very good they both cooperated with each other's. She gave birth to two daughters and a son. As I mentioned in his occupational life he went to KSA but his family remain in Pakistan. He said *"I don't know what was the reason you can say it's my emotional decision to give divorced. I left my family and my children stayed with mother from that time to now I haven't contacted with anyone."* Now his son is a medical doctor in Hyderabad Sindh and his both daughter have married in well off family [5].

He spend eleven year in KSA. He taught Arabic in different Saudi schools. In 1996 he came back to Pakistan. He moved to Peshawar and started new teaching career in Sir Syed Public School. In 2007 he joined Frontier Children Academy as an English teacher. *"I left my family and mostly I relied on hotels for meal so I have suffered with high blood pressure digestive problem. In 2012 I got minor heart attack and in 2015 I got severe heart attack I got admitted in hospital for 18 days. After that I resigned from school so my forty six years career goes to end."*

5.2. Social Life

Social experiences are part and parcel of any human life and it goes without saying that, interdependence is the keyword of our lives. In order to maintain balanced and cordial relationships, social networking and catching up with relatives and friends are important. As a student of literature and I also mentioned above that his great interest in arts he participated in social events like debate, event organization. Mr XYZ is extrovert person he has many friends.

As a sport man he spends his adulthood in sports activities. He also did volunteer work like charity collection, Ramadan drive, etc. After joining old age he left all these activities. Now he hasn't any friend he spent his whole in room [6].

5.3. Philosophy of Life

As we know that life is very uncertain we don't know what will be happen tomorrow every one live on hope. His life is full of ups and down. During interview he said I always stayed very optimistic about my life but there is lot of mishaps happened I thought all were you can say God will. When I asked Mr XYZ about his thoughts on aging, he answered by stating that aging is "a natural progression laid out by God. I am not scared to die and instead, I check out every day as a present. I don't see aging as a positive or a negative, but just a traditional, natural action."

He said "I never put the key of my happiness in someone's pocket. Happiness should come from within and it should never depend on anyone. I enjoyed life fully and face challenges bravely." His children's are independent and well settled but he is in old age home but still full of gratitude.

During interview he indicated that Holy Quran is the best for every aspect of life. "When I was university student I read William Shakespeare and other English writer but when I thoroughly study Quran I realized that it is the best book of world no doubt." He is very insightful about life and purpose of life but he is depressed also because he was living in old age where no one follows his talk like all old peoples staying there is not literate and insightful [7].

He said when I was in university my aim was to become minister of education but I wasn't go to politics. One important thing of his life was is poor relation with his parents after divorced of his parents he stayed with his grandfather he says "my father always has look after my elder brother and ignored me I don't know why may be he was handsome or something else that is regret of my life that my father ignored me."

5.4. Reasons to Join Old Age Home

As I mentioned above his life style became change after divorced. He hasn't followed any proper schedule for sleep for meals and other activities. It impacted on his health his blood pressure rises which causes cardiac problem. When he was in Peshawar his health goes down. He said in 2010 I was planning to marry again because I needed partner but I cancelled that plan. In April 2012 he suffers with heart attack that is not much severe but from that attack to onward he used cardiac medicine. After he recovered he continued his job. In 2015 he suffers with cardiac attack that is too much severe he admitted in hospital. This thing made him to retired from all these professional activities.

He said *"At a point in life when you have to hands up in front of life"* then he decided to join old age home because he hasn't any other option. So he joined Nijjat old age home in 2017 [8].

5.5. Current Life Style

Old persons especially job oriented persons became depressed and they feels worthlessness. They thought now they are useless. These feelings more in persons who left his family and hasn't any freedom to do what they wants e.g. go outside or visit to friends relatives place. Mr Jamil is an ex teacher his whole life spends in between student and other social gathering now he lives in old age home no one available for catharsis. Like he said *"this desolation is my life I wake up for fajar prayer, recite holy Quran, take breakfast see newspaper and then lay down bed take lunch and then dinner that is my life nothing else."* These statements show that he wants to deliver his knowledge and experiences to young generation or he want to do some task but he is unable to do. Although he is very active and optimistic type of person social aloofness made him depressed. We can't consider old age home and own home on same scale. In old age home person should have to follows the SOPs of institution. He registered in EOBI (employed old age benefits) he received monthly eight thousand this is total his income. He hasn't any other curricular activities before COVID 19 he

go for walk now it's banne [9].

6. Psychological Experiences of Living in Old Age Homes

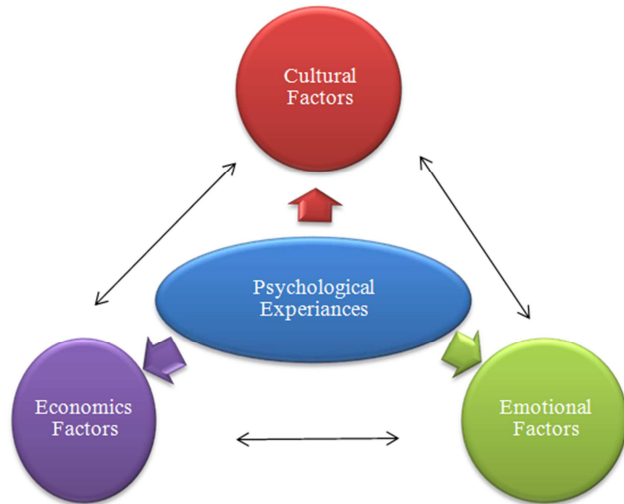


Figure 1. The psychological experience in term of three factor, cultural, economics and emotional.

6.1. Cultural Factors

Although apparently different but in experiences of the elderly two constructs were found to have an association. He explained different level of psychological pressure while applying for admission. Major sources of stress appeared to be mainly cultural concerns, availability of seats, and pressure. He highlighted cultural concerns a source of their stress in one way or another. For old men these psychological factors were comparatively less in a cultural sense, as compared to females. Mr XYZ said something which expressed not only his of many others agony;

“I was so disturbed, at one hand I had no other choice at that point to venture out from home. At other hand, I had solid concerns... truly solid concerns. You know in the general public, it is such a disfavor if your child can't care for you in your more established age. I didn't need this disfavor for myself or my child.”

In our particular culture, children's and especially 'the son' is responsible for taking care of the elders. Old Peoples generally rely on next generation for their look after because they become economically unstable and mostly have spent their earnings. The idea is not only embedded in culture but also religious belief system of the society. The act of sending parents to an old age home is not socially welcomed idea because of the said reasons and associates feeling of shame for the elderly.

“My son and daughters have their own issues, so I can't remain with them. Such a disgrace I am disillusioned and troubled! I actually feel worried about what individual's state about me living in an old age home.”

Since he belonged to a community where everyone knows other person and his life, it concerned what people will say

about him. In general, it is not a norm of our society to send parents to old age homes. In our society Children are expected to serve parent by all standards; social, cultural, and religious [10].

He also explained new dimension of his emotional and psychological experience that is a feeling of failure.

“I believe I have fizzled. My entire life I was caring for my son and the daughters. I did everything to accommodate them. Be that as it may, toward the end, they have achieved great societal position, however I have no place, and I surrendered. They don't have even a bed for me. I needn't bother with a great deal.”

Again, this narrative also highlights cultural perspective. Parents, in Pakistani culture, earn and support their children until they complete their education and in some instances, get married.

6.2. Economic Factors

Financial stability was one of the dimensions of psychological experience. He said I have limited money which I spend on medicine. He mentioned that on various occasions like Eidi and other festivals he receive some money as a gift. At sometimes some social workers visits and distribute money. Apart from all these, he does not mostly have money to spend. Money is stronger concern for old males as in the comparison of females. All the men in that old age home had been earning in professions like a laborer, a street hawker, rickshaw/taxi driver, butler, school teachers and spiritual healer. In our country Pakistan, retirement age for male is 60 years, and after that time in our country there are limited employment opportunities left for older persons.

“Well you know at times you need to go outside the foundation, you can't be restricted. Be that as it may, you don't have cash for charge or to purchase even something insignificant like bread rolls. I feel disempowered.”

As we all know, the majority of the old peoples live in poverty or are vulnerable to enter in the trap of poverty. The impact of poverty is compounded by the emotional stress an old face because of lack of financial sources. The old age home is already free of cost so it cannot provide some living allowance to its residents. The poverty remains almost same except that they get food and shelter.

6.3. Emotional Factors

Loneliness and isolation are identified in several studies as a problem of aged people. In this case, loneliness had become even more complex because these senior citizens were living in old age home, away from their homes. Most of them stated that feeling of loneliness had been aggravated since they have moved to the home.

“I trust it is lonelier here, at school where I was instructing from most recent 20 years I had many boarding students we play football in evening. In any case, here I never see a kid.”

In old age home, the only people they intermingle with are the aged persons like them. People miss their own old friends.

Lacks of social support networks in such homes also make older people feel lonelier. Although they make friends, but the sense of connectedness lacks because they were not old friends [11].

“Now I understood why they say that man is born alone. When I was able-bodied, I had the whole world around me. Now I need company, and no one is here. Not even my very dear and close ones.”

“This desolation is my life now. That time is gone when I

was young and had goals. Sometimes I feel my previous life was a dream. I have no goal no aim to live I am just waiting for the destiny. I have no purpose of life.”

Feelings of loneliness are not only nested in the feeling of being alone, or being away from own blood relations; these were also deeply rooted in the feeling of lack of purpose in life. In the past they had busy, full lives but now it is opposite situation. No aim for life and passing days while waiting for destiny.

6.4. Physical Condition

Table 1. Five senses condition.

Vision	He is having good vision. He can able to read newspaper and books.
Hearing	His hearing ability is also good. He can hear telephone without loudspeaker.
Smell	He has a problem in sensing the smell.
Touch	He an easily feel pain when he will walk on the rough area. He can easily identify objects through touch
Taste	He never eats spicy food mostly prefer easily digestible food which is healthy and tasty. He likes to eat sweets.

He hasn't any difficulty in walking. He offered his prayers without any physical support. These days due to pandemic of COVID 19 institution not allow him to go outside before that he used to go outside at evening with staff. Overall his physical condition is good as per his age.

7. Qualitative Analysis

Successful aging is multidimensional, encompassing the avoidance of disease and disability, the up keeping of high physical and cognitive functions while sustaining engagement in social and productive activities. In this case study there are progressive changes in Mr XYZ' life. When he was with his family he had no any medical problem. Later he suffered with medical problem. His emotional pain is much intensive than his physical pain that keeps hitting him. He feels useless and wishes to do something [12].

He has mixed like during interview he said I am full of gratitude I have no worry and I am very optimistic about my life but on the other hand there is feeling of loneliness and worthlessness also present. Although he claims to be contented yet life has become meaningless for him he feels lonely and unoccupied [13].

His talking on different aspect shows he is not fully satisfied with his life he hasn't adjusting himself in current situation. It is has been shown his aging has not been successful considering his past experiences in life and moderate score on test that was conducted on him.

In this case one of the major themes relating to gerontology that came about through this interview was the issue of financial concerns and a feeling of fear in regards to aging and having no monetary resources set aside. As the baby boomer generation continues to age, the number of older adults in the world is drastically increasing. The resources to support the living needs of those people are simply not available in today's struggling economy and this has many older adults scared of how they're going to pay for assistance if they should need it. What this means is that for someone like Mr XYZ, who has

little money or we can say no money, he is faced with the concern that resources will not be available to him. He commented that the divorce, including his own “detrimental behaviors and bad decisions” led to the state he's in today. Without prompting, Mr XYZ went right into a conversation about how unhappy he is with his lack of effort to take proper care of himself. Another important theme relating to gerontology that arose during this interview was the nutritional changes that older adults go through [14].

Mr XYZ interview was at times difficult while he was discussing disappointment with himself and how he has treated his body. I also observed the fear in his voice and anxious facial expressions as he discussed concepts of loneliness, financial struggles and listed the varied ailments that already affect his quality of life at seventy one years of age.

8. Conclusion

At the end of this interview with an elderly person, my assumptions was confirmed that human have unresolved emotions about their past life style, growing age and surroundings. Many of the concerns that my client uttered were focusing on nutritional health, a fear of loss of autonomy, loneliness and potential financial hardship. In order to address these concerns that elderly persons experience, the residence like Nijjat should arrange some recreational activities to keep its residents happy and calm. These include sports, outside trips and movies etc. besides healthy food. Other comforts such as relative visits will also reduce their sense of loneliness. An educated elderly person can be asked to teach other residents to have good time besides story telling [15]. Furthermore nurses and old home staff must be well-trained communicators and have the knowledge and skills to provide insight, educational tools and resources for these individuals in order to facilitate a better transition into retirement and the changes that occur with the aging procedure.

References

- [1] Najjat Foundation. Retrieved from <http://najjat.org/>
- [2] World Health Organization. (2007). Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide.
- [3] United Nations. (2002). Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.
- [4] Byles, J., et al. (2013). Successful Aging: The Contribution of Early-Life and Midlife Risk Factors.
- [5] Fazal, S., et al. (2019). Exploring Social Connectedness and its Impact on the Mental Health of Older Adults in Pakistan.
- [6] Khan, S. A., et al. (2020). Living Arrangements and Psychological Well-being of Elderly in Pakistan.
- [7] Iqbal, M. (2017). Ageing in Pakistan: Challenges and Opportunities.
- [8] Rehman, A., et al. (2019). Factors Affecting the Health of Elderly People in Pakistan.
- [9] Arif, G. M., et al. (2017). Aging and Poverty in Pakistan: A Gender Perspective.
- [10] Baji, P. T., et al. (2018). Physical Health Problems and Mental Health Issues Among the Elderly in Pakistan.
- [11] Akhtar, M., et al. (2017). Social Support and Subjective Well-being Among the Elderly in Pakistan.
- [12] Chaudhry, S., et al. (2020). Psychological Well-being of Elderly Living in Old Age Homes: A Comparative Study.
- [13] Rana, R. H., et al. (2020). Elder Abuse in Pakistan: A Review of Existing Literature.
- [14] Ali, T. S., et al. (2016). Health and Social Problems of the Elderly: A Cross-Sectional Study in Karachi, Pakistan.
- [15] Alam, M., et al. (2019). Determinants of Psychological Well-being Among the Elderly in Pakistan.