

**THE ELDERLY PEOPLES' PERCEPTION IN REFERENCE TO THEIR
SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING IN SELECTED MAINSTREAM CHURCHES IN
AFFLUENT KAREN-LANGATA, NAIROBI, KENYA**

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How to cite this article: Gachuri, E. W., Adetunji, C. M., & Wanjao, J. N. (2024). The Elderly Peoples' Perception in Reference to Their Subjective Wellbeing in Selected Mainstream Churches in Affluent Karen-Langata, Nairobi, Kenya. *Journal of Sociology, Psychology & Religious Studies*, 4(1), 13-26.

Abstract

There is a global concern about the exponential growth of the aging population, which must be put into perspective. By 2019, there were one billion people who were 60 years of age or older. This study investigated the elderly peoples' perception in reference to their subjective wellbeing in selected mainstream churches in affluent Karen-Langata, Nairobi, Kenya. The study used a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach. Purposeful sampling method was used to select 11 respondents in the in-depth interviews and 12 respondents in the focus group discussions (FGDs). The population of the study was the category of the young-old who were 60-75 years old. Verbatim data was transcribed, and descriptive themes were generated to show individual perspectives. Most of the elderly's subjective wellbeing was found to be influenced by their sense of self-actualization, their sense of belonging, and their level of life satisfaction. The elderly felt a sense of belonging when they were accepted, given attention, and support by their close family and friends, included in neighbourhood events and held leadership positions in the community. The growing elderly population should prompt policymakers to operationalize measures that will aptly improve their psychosocial wellbeing. The County government should plan, design, and enforce construction with the elderly in mind where ramps, lifts, and accessible, bedrooms are included. The church can organize talks and forums on healthy aging, healthy grieving mechanisms, and setting up structures and programmes for better support to the elderly.

Keywords: *Subjective wellbeing, Elderly People Perception, Mainstream Churches*

1.0 Introduction

Psychosocial wellbeing is that which pertains to the influence of social and psychological factors on an individual's mind or behaviour. Consequently, people's psychological aspects are related to their social conditions, mental health, and emotional health (Ivbijaro et al., 2020). Psychological wellbeing involves having a purpose in life, aspiring for personal development, having self-acceptance, autonomy, and environmental mastery (Medveder & Landhuis, 2018). On the other hand, social wellbeing entails the assessment of a person's circumstances and functioning in society; it includes social integration, social coherence, social contribution, and social actualization (Nishaat & Magari, 2021).

There is a global concern about the exponential growth of the aging population, which must be put into perspective. By 2019, there were one billion people who were 60 years of age or older. By 2030, that number is predicted to increase to 1.4 billion, and by 2050, it will reach 2.1 billion (World population aging, 2019). Most of the studies on the elderly have been done in developed countries, which reflect their environmental contexts and may not be applicable in a different setting. However, few studies on the psychosocial wellbeing of the elderly in Sub-Saharan Africa have been done in Nigeria and South Africa. On the other hand, studies on the elderly in Kenya have concentrated on the elderly living in rural areas, poor urban settings, and old people's homes. Consequently, this study endeavoured to fill the knowledge gap in the literature by investigating how the elderly who attend mainstream churches in the affluent parts of Karen-Langata area perceive their psychosocial wellbeing. The study aimed to provide useful insights into how their self-perception of their psychosocial wellbeing influenced their everyday experiences. In addition, the study sought to identify policies that can mitigate the problems they face. The aim was to include this population of elderly people to be among those whose status of wellbeing is understood and therefore can be addressed where need be. The study set to investigate the elderly peoples' perception of their subjective wellbeing in selected mainstream churches in affluent Karen-Langata, Nairobi, Kenya

2.0 Literature Review

Subjective wellbeing is about people's cognitive and affective evaluations of their lives (Pleeging, et al., 2021). It is composed of three components, namely: - evaluative, hedonic, and eudemonic (Tumanggor, 2021). The evaluative component encompasses a cognitive assessment of one's whole life or life satisfaction in specific areas like relationships and work. The hedonic component is comprised of the affective everyday feelings associated with people's lives; they can be positive or pleasant feelings like joy, elation, affection, and contentment, or they can be negative and unpleasant feelings like guilt, shame, anger, sadness, worry, stress, or even depression. The eudemonic component deals with the meaning and purpose of people's lives, supportive social relationships, and feelings of mastery (Douma et al., 2017; Rishworth et al., 2020; Maddux, 2018). Subjective wellbeing therefore denotes the quality of life which is based on people's appraisal of their lives and relies on what one perceives as important based on their standards. This objective therefore interrogated how elderly people determine their life satisfaction, their sense of belonging, and how they determine their self-actualization, which were constructs of psychosocial wellbeing in this study.

Life satisfaction indicates how people evaluate their lives holistically, based on their own standards (Bidzan-Bluma et al., 2020). It includes relationships with others, satisfaction with one's health, and with their personal life, contentment with their spatiality, and fulfillment with their work (Kubiszewsk et al., 2018). A sense of belonging is focused on gaining acceptance, attention, and support from group members, while also providing the same attention to other members (Strayhorn, 2018). Social ties that come with a sense of belonging are a protective factor that aids in the management of stress and other behavioural issues (Van Orden et al., 2021). We are more resilient and often cope more effectively with difficult times in our lives when we feel we have support and are not alone. Coping effectively with adversity reduces the physical and mental effects of the situation (Neenan, 2017). A lack of belonging can lead to social behaviours that interfere with a person's ability to connect to others, thereby creating a cycle of events that further weakens a sense of belonging. Depression, anxiety, and suicide are common mental health conditions associated with missing out on belonging (Cohen, & McKay, 2020). Self-actualization refers to fully realizing one's potential, as well as fully developing

one's abilities and appreciation for life; it improves and influences life quality (Tripathi, 2018). Self-actualization in the elderly is felt when they reach their potential by getting satisfied with their lives, despite their limitations (Gholamnejad et al., 2019).

There are studies conducted in many parts of the world on subjective wellbeing in the elderly, as indicated hereafter. In a study conducted in Yunling County, Taiwan by Chung et al., (2021), they examined the relationship between the subjective wellbeing of the elderly and their satisfaction with social welfare and other facilitating factors in their lives that enable social connectedness, economic support, and technological acceptance. The findings of the study were that the elderly's economic support and welfare satisfaction influenced their subjective wellbeing. The study also found that social connectedness and technological acceptance were predictors of subjective wellbeing. However, the study noted that it was conducted among the Taiwanese elderly in rural areas and the research questions were limited by the original questionnaire used in the study. The results, therefore, may not apply to an elderly population living in other parts of the world or an urban setting

3.0 Methodology

The study used a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach. Purposeful sampling method was used to select 11 respondents in the in-depth interviews and 12 respondents in the focus group discussions (FGDs). The population of the study was the category of the young-old who were 60-75 years old. Pac University and NACOSTI gave the researcher permission to conduct the study. Data was collected using videotape recordings and field notes. Verbatim data was transcribed, and descriptive themes were generated to show individual perspectives.

4.0 Results and Discussion

The study proposed to understand how the elderly peoples' perception influenced their subjective wellbeing. To achieve this objective, the study attracted several themes like the elderly people's perception of life satisfaction the elderly people's perception of having a sense of belonging, and the elderly people's perception of self-actualization in old age. The themes also attracted several sub-themes such as the meaning of aging well for elderly people, factors that contribute to aging well, factors that inhibit life satisfaction in old age, factors that contribute to the elderly's sense of belonging, challenges of effecting a sense of belonging in old age, accomplishment of life's set goals and regrets of life's set goals in old age. Data on how the elderly perceive their subjective well-being was obtained by extracting various expressions of respondents' subjective experiences. The findings are represented in Table 1 by a summary of themes and sub-themes captured during the in-depth interview as indicators of their subjective well-being.

Table 1: Themes and Sub-Themes Indicators of Subjective Wellbeing

Themes	Subthemes
Elderly peoples' perception of life satisfaction.	-Meaning of aging well for the elderly people. -Factors that inhibit life satisfaction in old age -Patriarchal patronage
Elderly people's perception of having a sense of belonging	- Factors that contribute to the elderly's sense of belonging -Challenges of effecting a sense of belonging in old age
Elderly peoples' perception of self-actualization in old age.	-Accomplishment of life's set goals -Regrets of life's set goals in old age

Perception of Life Satisfaction

Meaning of Aging Well for the Elderly People.

This study sought to explore the perception of the meaning of aging well for the elderly. Their sentiments are captured in the following sentences:

R.01, (age 69), said this about aging well:

I think I have aged well because I can take care of myself. I live in my own house. I have money to go to the hospital when I'm sick. I have houses I rent out which help me to pay my bills. I'm in control of my life and I'm not a burden to anybody.

Similarly, R.02 (age 75), said:

I have aged well, we live in our own house, I have no diseases, my children are grown, I have no responsibilities, no stresses, I now live in a house with no stairs, I'm in a good neighbourhood, a supportive church and we had invested on rentals which pay our bills. I feel fulfilled and blessed.

R.04 (age 65) retorted:

I have aged gracefully. I have no struggles, still mobile, I run a school I have just completed a house and it has a tenant so I'm financially stable. I don't have a health condition and when I get sick, I still have health coverage so I can see a doctor. I bite what I can chew. I have accepted my present age and I'm happy.

While R.06 (age 72) said:

I have no old age diseases and I walk 12 kilometres with friends. I rarely get sick, I have a small body, we live in our own house and have some rentals that feed us and pay our bills, our children live in America, and we do not burden them with our upkeep. I can say I have aged well.

From the focus group discussion R.0004 (age 63) said:

My husband's pension makes me feel secure because I go to the hospital when I'm sick. I'm independent because I do not rely on my children. When they have no time for me, I pay a driver to take me where I want to go, or I take a Taxi.

R.0004 (age 64), from a Focus Group Discussion said:

"My sense of satisfaction comes from reading and sharing the word of God, coming for fellowship, and visiting the members when they have problems."

Life satisfaction reflects how people assess their lives as a whole based on their own standards (Bidzan-Bluma et al., 2020). It includes interpersonal relationships, satisfaction with one's health and personal life, contentment with one's spirituality, and fulfillment with one's work (Kubiszewsk et al., 2018). This translates to a feeling that one has aged well.

The respondents reported that aging well for them entailed having homes, being self-reliant where they can take care of themselves, leading a comfortable life, having no health conditions, having health insurance to take care of them in case of sickness, and being mobile too. The result of this study revealed that ten respondents felt they had life satisfaction because they were living in their own homes and not in rental premises and good neighbourhoods. Failure to build a family home emerged as a source of regret for the elderly. Six respondents pegged their life satisfaction and their aging well to the fact that their children were through with school and had jobs. On the other hand, five respondents felt they had not aged well because either their children had dropped out of school, or had not secured any jobs, and some had no families,

making them dependent on their parents in their old age. Having self-reliance where they were financially independent, leading a comfortable life, having no health conditions, having health insurance to take care of them in case of sickness, and being mobile to move to where they wanted to go meant that they had aged well. Three respondents attributed their aging well and life satisfaction to good health.

All the respondents credited their life satisfaction to their spirituality and from being involved in church functions and fellowships. This can be attributed to the fact that the study was on those who attended mainstream churches in Karen, Langata in Nairobi Kenya. This is consistent with the findings by Bidzan-Bluma et al. (2020) and Kubiszewsk et al. (2018) that life satisfaction reflects how people assess their lives as a whole based on their own standards and it includes interpersonal relationships, satisfaction with one's health and personal lives, contentment with one's spirituality, and fulfillment with one's work. This is the reason why it was imperative to do this study to get a phenomenological meaning of the factors that contribute to self- satisfaction of the elderly.

Factors That Inhibited Life Satisfaction in the Elderly People.

The respondents in the study felt there were factors in their lives that hindered them from fully attaining life satisfaction as captured in the following responses:

R.11 (age 63) narrated:

I wouldn't say I'm satisfied with life. My husband died when I retired and as if that was not enough my children relocated to America and I moved to a new neighbourhood. This has made me feel lonely. I was also recently diagnosed with diabetes and arthritis all these things have compromised my happiness.

While R.09 (age 65) said:

After my husband died the children started fighting for inheritance even after we shared what was there. Two children misused their money while the other three invested theirs. The two have even taken me to court and the judge ruled in my favour. I never knew I could stay for a year without talking to my children. I have cut ties with them. I have decided everybody should stay in their own houses. I hope they will come back someday. This of course makes me unhappy.

From the Focus Group Discussion R.003 (age 68) had this to say:

The death of my husband, health challenges, lack of health insurance, limited finances, and children living abroad hindered my life satisfaction. I'm lonely that is why coming for fellowship is good for me. The insurance brokers find the elderly like me to be high risk.

According to the study findings, limited finances, poor health, and lack of health insurance contributed to the elderly people's lack of self-satisfaction in old age. Death of a spouse, inheritance wrangles, and family cut-offs for fear of conflicts also contributed to a lack of self-satisfaction for the elderly. On the other hand, children relocating abroad, or moving to a new neighbourhood made the elderly experience loneliness which made some of them look forward to attending church functions. Many of the respondents were managing diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, and arthritis, and their perception of these diseases was compromising their life satisfaction in old age and therefore their subjective wellbeing. This was consistent with the study by Carandang et al. (2020) that self-rated health determined the self-satisfaction of the elderly and therefore their subjective wellbeing.

Patriarchal Patronage.

R.07 (age 73) narrated:

Some factors hinder my life satisfaction at this age. The fact that my husband makes sure everything we own is in his name. One of our daughters cannot be given any property because she is married while my husband has gifted our daughter who is not married and our son a house where we live. This made my other daughter become withdrawn and made me wonder if getting married was a crime. This frustrates me and makes me feel like my needs are not taken care of because I'm a woman.

The same was stated by R.08 (age 74) said:

I'm not as vibrant as I was health-wise, I have arthritis that slows me down. I'm on painkillers and I fear their side effects. I also retired early, and my husband and I invested together. Unfortunately, everything we have is in his name. Whenever we get the money, I have no say in how it is used. This of course does hinder my satisfaction and leaves me bitter.

R.09 (age 65) recounted her life:

After retirement at 32 years after having the last born the routine changed. I joined my husband in business to run a petrol station. This was not my dream, but I was told to resign. I had no formal salary or my own income. I felt disorganized since I had not planned for it. Relying on my husband to give me money was very difficult for me. I was angry at times. It depended on my husband's approval of what to spend. Working hours were erratic and unpredictable. I felt like I was floating.

The results of this study revealed that patriarchal patronage where the husbands controlled when the wives would stop working to exclude them from owning property or their daughters' inheriting property hindered their life satisfaction. The daughters were locked out of inheritance because they were married making them withdrawn and affecting their elderly mothers who felt that it was unfair. Forced early resignation or retirement, disorganized them since they had not planned for it. They invested with their husbands in family businesses while their husbands controlled the finances, left the elderly women bitter and unsatisfied with their lives. Relying on their husbands to give them money not only curtailed their financial freedom but made them angry at times as their husbands had to approve of how the money was spent. This amounted to following cultural scripts of patriarchal patronage where the husbands were the head of their households owning everything and controlling all the wealth. The belief also is that women inherited wealth when they were married and could not be considered in sharing wealth in their families of origin. This would also reflect Bowen's Nuclear emotional process where one spouse presses the other to think in a certain way and exerts control over them leading them to have high levels of anxiety (Delvin, 2021).

Perception of Having a Sense of Belonging

This study sought to assess the elderly peoples' perception of their sense of belonging and therefore their subjective wellbeing. This theme attracted subthemes like factors that contribute to the elderly's sense of belonging and challenges of effecting a sense of belonging in old age.

Factors That Contributed to The Elderly Peoples' Sense of Belonging.

Social ties that come with a sense of belonging are a protective factor that aids in the management of stress and other behavioural issues (Strayhorn, 2018; Van Orden et al., 2021). To understand the subjective wellbeing of the elderly, the study interviewed them on the

relationships within their contexts or the factors that contributed to their sense of belonging. Their responses are captured in the following sentences:

R.02 (age75), said:

I have a close-knit family. My sisters and brothers and their children are free to come and ask for help from my husband and I. We have educated most of them. Where I am married, we are also close. Our monthly meetings bind us and make us know each other. The church and social groups I belong to give me a sense of belonging.

R.06 (age72) also recounted:

The fact that I have a family who care for each other gives me a sense of belonging. The death of our last born brought my extended family closer. I have friends who I can rely on and who check on me. My neighbours and the church are also like family to me. The schools where I have been a member of the board and the upcountry neighbours are also like family to me.

Similarly, R.05 (age 61) said:

My family gives me a sense of belonging. I am a member of a group of 300 engineers who were at university with me. We raise money to help each other in case of a problem and this gives me a sense of belonging. Being a member of my church, a director of the Kabarok mission, the Samaritan purse, and the Billy Graham Foundation

Likewise, R.09 (age 65) explained:

I get my sense of belonging through a fellowship from various groups like the widows' fellowship in a church. When my neighbours invite me when they have occasions, when they include me in the neighbourhood trips, calling to check on me or dropping by and inviting me to take walks with them. The church and the neighbourhood give me leadership roles.

The results of this study revealed respondents gained acceptance, attention, and support from close family ties, the church, social support from friends, and being included in neighbourhood functions. In addition, having leadership positions in the community gave the elderly a sense of belonging.

Challenges Affecting a Sense of Belonging in The Elderly People.

On the contrary, some respondents felt like they had no sense of belonging. Their disclosures are picked from the following discourses,

R.01 (age 69) said:

I do not have that sense of belonging I'm not close to my children but they at times come when I call them. My grandchildren who live next door only come to my house when their parents send them, and they are in a hurry to leave. My two sisters at times check on me. The Reverend can come when I miss going to church like three times or send the elders to check on me.

Similarly, R.11 (age 63) explained:

My family of origin makes me feel like a stranger. When I go to help my mother, I am not sure whether my help is acceptable or not. I cannot leave my house to stay with her and she refuses to come and live with me because I'm her child, yet she is getting weaker every day and my siblings do not get involved in looking after her. I do not know whether to go and settle in my late husband's up-country home without an ancestral home, a husband,

and the children. I do not fit in where I'm married since my stepchildren inherited the matrimonial home when my husband died, and I can't start building when my children relocated to America. This makes me feel lost and not have a sense of belonging.

According to the findings of the study, family breakups, due to conflicts, death of a spouse inheritance wrangles, and stepchildren problems leading to family cut-offs as noted by Lampis, et al. (2019) compromised the sense of belonging of the elderly. Children living abroad or moving to a new neighbourhood impacted the sense of belonging of the elderly. Other challenges included culture that prevented the elderly from living with their ailing parents because they were married also affected the sense of belonging of the elderly people and their subjective wellbeing.

Perception of Self-Actualization in Old Age

This theme came about as the study sought to understand the elderly people's perception of self-actualization in old age. The theme attracted other sub-themes like accomplishment of life's set goals and regrets of life's set goals in old age.

Accomplishment of Life's Set Goals.

The study interviewed the elderly on their accomplishments of life's set goals, to better understand how self-actualization influences the subjective wellbeing of the elderly. The findings were captured in the following conversations.

R.02, (age 75) said:

I might not have set goals for retirement, but I live in my house, so I do not have to worry about rent. I have a car and I can drive from one place to another I also took children to school, and they are grown. Two are working but one is still looking for a job. I can still move from one place to another without any assistance and I do not have a major health problem.

Likewise, R.11 (age 63) responded:

I had not set any goals in life. Like any other woman my age I had a cultural script. To grow, go to school, get a job, get married, get children, have grandchildren, and grow old gracefully. I have lived a meaningful life and I am happy. I am waiting for grandchildren if God blesses my children, but unfortunately, I have to lead a life alone since my husband passed on.

R.06 (age 72) also said:

I went to school, got married, and raised a family, I can feed myself and I am financially independent. I built my family home in Nairobi and upcountry. I took my children to the best schools abroad. Worked in good companies rose through the ranks and became a regional director. I think I met most of the goals I had set.

Similarly, R.04 (age 65) replied:

I had not set the goals. I had a supportive husband. We raised a beautiful family, we have a home in Nairobi and upcountry and live in a good neighbourhood. Both of our families with my late husband have been loving and supportive. I would say I have lived a meaningful life other than the fact that I did not go back to school. Other than the feeling I should have travelled more I would say I am happy with my life.

From the Focus Group Discussions:

R.001 (age 65) narrated:

“My late husband told me to resign and join him in running the office. I had not thought about retirement at that age and therefore I had not set any goals.”

According to the findings of the study, many of the elderly had not set any goals. They had to fit in within the cultural scripts of going to school, working, getting married, raising a family, and waiting for grandchildren which made them feel they had attained most of the goals they were supposed to have accomplished. This is consistent with the findings of Chung et al. (2021); Lopez et al. (2020) and Saadeh et al. (2020), that studies reflect their environmental contexts and cannot be applicable in a different setting which justifies this study. This also agrees with Maree (2021) that people make choices in line with their social and cultural needs and therefore the elderly need not have made personal goals in life but fit in with the needs of the society. Self-actualization is the process of fully realizing one's potential and developing one's abilities and appreciation for life. It enhances and influences the quality of life (Tripathi, 2018). It is experienced by the elderly when they reach their full potential by being content with their lives despite their limitations (Gholamnejad et al., 2019) The attainment of self – self-actualization leads to Ego-Integrity according to Eric Erickson's eighth stage of psychosocial development (Henia, 2021).

Regrets in Life Set Goals in Old Age

On the other hand, some respondents felt they had not fully attained their self-actualization as captured in the following conversations:

R.01 (age 69), said:

I live on my late husband's pension because I retired early, my business failed, and had not planned for retirement. We had issues in my marriage and my husband used to harass me. Sometimes I think the children treat me badly because they grew up seeing their father harassing me. Other than one of my children who went to America, three of my children did not do well in school. They dropped out of school in form four and they do not have good jobs. This makes me feel inadequate when other parents are talking about how well their children are doing. I ended up giving them a place to live in and sometimes it breaks my heart to see them struggling to feed their families.

Similarly, R.09 (age 65) explained:

Retiring at 32 was not my idea and sometimes it brings regrets when I see how my workmates rose in their careers. I also wished I could have gone on with school instead of dropping out at form four to get employed because I was a bright student. I also had a violent family life with a husband who was at times unkind. The fact that I am estranged from some of my children makes me wonder where I failed as a mother.

The findings revealed that although the circumstances of resignation were different for R.01 and R.09 the two respondents attributed their failure to achieve self-actualization to control from spouses and the aggression they experienced which impacted their subjective wellbeing. The two had difficult marriages with their late spouses and their children were estranged from them. This also impacted the children's upbringing where they dropped out of school, and treated their mother with disrespect as they saw their father doing. This can be seen as triangulation where the father sided with the children against the mother, or the children sided against their mother. The two respondents have also an emotional cut-off from their families to escape familial conflicts with their children due to inheritance feuds according to Lampis et al. (2019). There are the regrets of failed businesses and failure to not to have continued with education. The elderly people also expressed regrets that their children dropped out of school

in form four, cannot hold good jobs, and are dependent on them. The effect of conflictual marriages and the impact of control from a spouse and aggression experienced earlier in life is noted in later life from two respondents who are widows who have emotional cut-off from their children due to inheritance wrangles as their grown-up children depend on them.

On the other hand, R.07 (age 73) explained:

“I would have done a bit of investment on my own. Something I could call my own like a plot. It would have helped me later in life.”

The same was echoed by R.11 (age 63)

I would have gone back to school this would have improved my life. I was not a good saver I should have invested better. I still struggle with financial discipline. I should have taken better care of my health. Construction has made me more financially accountable, and I am now health conscious.

While another R.05 (age 61) said:

“We now live in a rented house, but I had planned to have my own house by the time I was 60”.

These sentiments are in line with Erik Erikson’s eighth stage where the elderly at this stage of psychosocial development, strive for integrity rather than despair. Resolving the crisis in this manner provides them with peace and a sense of accomplishment (Erickson (1950), as reviewed by Orenstein et al. (2020). Reflecting on their lives provides them with either satisfaction or a sense of failure (Henia, 2021).

According to the objective of the study, the elderly people’s perception of their life satisfaction, sense of belonging, and self-actualization are likely to influence their subjective wellbeing (Orenstein, & Lewis, 2020). Most elderly people believed that they had aged well when they had a home, financial independence, no health conditions, health insurance, mobility, spiritual wellness, and when their children were settled. When they felt fulfilled with the life they had led as posited by Kubiszewsk et al. (2018). However, Patriarchal patronage, bereavement of their spouses, and poor health were factors attributed to inhibit their subjective wellbeing. Most of the elderly people felt that gaining acceptance, attention, and support from close family ties, the church, social support from friends, and being included in neighbourhood functions and having leadership positions in the community gave them a sense of belonging. Most of the elderly people felt they had attained self-actualization in old age because they had fitted in with their cultural script of raising a family, being financially independent, having a home, and living in a good neighbourhood. Failed businesses, failure to continue with education, and children dropping out of school in form four and therefore not holding good jobs and depending on their parents’ brought regrets in some of the elderly people.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated how the elderly’s perception influenced their subjective wellbeing. The study in this objective revealed that the meaning of aging well for the elderly people was: - having a family and a home, having financial independence and self-reliance, when they were in good health conditions, and having health insurance in case of sickness. It was also when they had the mobility to move from one place to another, when they had spiritual wellness, and when their children were settled and not relying on them. These factors led to their subjective wellbeing.

The results of this study revealed that fitting into the cultural script where one had close family ties a home, good health, and finances. It is also important to note that most of the elderly respondents gained acceptance, attention, and support from close family ties, the church, and social support from friends and were included in neighbourhood functions. They were also given leadership positions in the community which the elderly a sense of belonging and independence as posited by Steptoe and Fancourt (2019), that higher income, predicted higher subjective well-being and a sense of wellbeing.

The study found that two of the respondents felt like they had no sense of belonging. This was due to family breakups after the bereavement of their spouses. Families were separated and therefore had emotional cut-offs to avoid conflicts as noted by Lampis et al. (2019). Most elderly people lacked any sort of goals. They were forced to follow the cultural norms of going to school, finding employment, getting married, raising a family, and waiting for grandchildren, which gave them the impression that they had achieved most of the objectives they were expected to have. This made the parents reflect with satisfaction on their achievement and therefore attained a feeling of social actualization and generativity. This is justified by the findings of Chung et al. (2021); Lopez et al. (2020); and Saadeh et al. (2020), which show that studies reflect their environmental contexts and cannot be applicable in a different setting. Having a home, means of transport, children who had settled down, being financially independent a supportive family, and a good neighbourhood were seen as self-actualization by the elderly. This concurs with Erickson, as cited by Maree (2021), that decisions are made in accordance with social and cultural needs, so older people did not need to have set personal life goals but rather had to fit in.

The study established that being asked to resign by their spouses from their jobs, having an abusive marriage, and being estranged from one's children were attributed to the elderly's failure to achieve self-actualization and therefore to their lack of subjective wellbeing. Triangulation was noted where the fathers sided with the children against the mother, or the children sided against their mother. There was an emotional cut-off from the family of origin to escape familial conflicts due to inheritance feuds according to Bowen as cited by Lampis et al., (2019). Failed businesses, failure to continue with education, and children dropping out of school in form four and therefore not holding good jobs and depending on their parents' brought regrets and despair in the elderly.

5.0 Conclusion

Most of the elderly's subjective wellbeing was found to be influenced by their sense of self-actualization, their sense of belonging, and their level of life satisfaction. The elderly respondents felt fulfilled by having a family home, living in a good neighbourhood, being content with their spirituality, finding fulfillment in their work, and having children who were successful in their careers. Conversely, patriarchal patronage, where husbands controlled their wives' careers, forced them to retire before they were expected, barred them from owning property and prevented their daughters from inheriting property, reduced the level of life satisfaction among the elderly.

The elderly felt a sense of belonging when they were accepted, given attention, and supported by their close family and friends included in neighbourhood events, and held leadership positions in the community. On the other hand, having poor health, losing a spouse, children leaving home, moving to a new neighbourhood, inheritance disputes, and cultural disagreements prevent the elderly from having a sense of belonging. The elderly believed that they achieved self-actualization in old age when they felt content and satisfied that they had

followed the cultural expectations of having worked, owned a home, raised independent children, retired when they were financially able to do so, and being mobile enough to go about their daily lives.

The elderly people experienced a sense of failure and despair, which negatively impacted their subjective wellbeing when they were forced to leave their jobs early and retire without a pension, having inheritance disputes that resulted in emotional cut-offs, failing businesses, and raising dependent children.

6.0 Recommendations

Policy Makers

The study acknowledged there were carefully considered policies regarding the elderly, but the policies had not been fully put into practice. The growing elderly population should prompt policymakers to operationalize measures that will aptly improve their psychosocial wellbeing.

National and Local Government

The National government should spearhead policies that ensure workers are given financial education to help them set goals while in employment to prepare for old age. The policies should ensure that the elderly will have enough money to cushion them against poverty in their retirement. The government can also review the Ksh. 2,000 given to the elderly taking into account those who also retired at 60 years. Besides, elderly-friendly insurance plans or free medical services for the elderly should be available. Moreover, social workers ought to be tasked with keeping an eye on the elderly. Still, elderly people should be informed of their rights, and the chiefs should know who they are and maintain records of them. The County government should plan, design, and enforce construction with the elderly in mind where ramps, lifts, and accessible, bedrooms are included.

Mental Health Professionals

Old age is accompanied by old age diseases, financial difficulties brought on by retirement, changes in family dynamics brought on by the loss of spouses or children moving out of the home, and loss of social networks, all of which can have an impact on the elderly and their psychosocial wellbeing. To help the elderly improve their psychosocial wellbeing, mental health professionals like psychologists, counsellors, and marriage and family therapists should be availed to them.

Religious Leaders

The churches should prioritize programs for the elderly. They can avail transportation arrangements for those who are unable to attend services. The church administrators can call the elderly and set up home visits to see how they are doing. A fund that helps the elderly who cannot afford the necessities should be set up. The church can explore how the elderly congregants can be facilitated to get health insurance. This would assist the elderly in resolving their problems and achieving their psychosocial wellbeing. The church can organize talks and forums on healthy aging, healthy grieving mechanisms, and setting up structures and programmes for better support to the elderly.

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