

FUNCTIONAL DISABILITY AND ABILITY IN SWEDISH 85-YEAR-OLDS — A COMPARISON OF THREE COHORTS BORN 20 YEARS APART

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Functional disability is an important issue in very old age. There is some evidence that more recently born individuals have a higher capacity regarding instrumental and basic activities of daily living (IADL, ADL) and that activity involvement may have preventive effects. This study investigated ADL and IADL and leisure activities in two population-based samples of 85-year-olds. Using identical methods, 494 85-year olds were assessed in 1986–87, and 571 85-year olds were assessed 2008–09. Findings indicate that ADL disability decreased across cohorts ($P < 0.001$), but IADL disability increased ($P < 0.05$). Involvement in seniors associations and other associations decreased for women ($P < 0.05$), while reading books regularly was reported more often ($P < 0.001$). In sum, results indicate that although later born cohorts are better equipped to maintain independence in terms of ADL, increased IADL disability and decreased social participation require action to adapt structures and services to the needs of ageing populations.

THE ROLE OF ACTIVITIES FOR COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING: FINDINGS FROM THE HEIDELBERG CENTENARIAN STUDIES

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Cognitive functioning is essential for maintaining independence in very old age. With more individuals reaching very old age, factors that could prevent age-associated loss in cognition are increasingly important. The present study compared levels of cognitive functioning in two cohorts of centenarians and investigated the role of prior activities in the total sample as well as by cohorts, comparing the population-based First ($n = 91$, born 1900/1, Mage = 100.22 years) and Second ($n = 95$, born 1910/1, Mage = 100.48 years) Heidelberg Centenarian Studies. Cognitive functioning (measured by a shortened Mini-Mental State Examination) was higher in the more recent centenarian cohort. Regression findings indicated that living in a care facility was negatively associated with cognition whereas activities and health were positively associated. However, cohort-differential patterns were found for health and activities. Findings indicate better functioning in more recent centenarian cohorts and suggest greater importance of lifestyle in today's centenarians.

ACTIVITIES ENABLE SUCCESSFUL AGING IN VERY OLD AGE: FINDINGS FROM THE FORDHAM CENTENARIAN STUDY

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Engaging in leisure activities in older adulthood is assumed to be a critical factor for successful aging. This paper

investigated activity patterns in the Fordham Centenarian Study ($N = 119$; Mage = 99.25, 95–107 years). Activity categories were identified based on Jopp and Hertzog (2010): social-private, social-public, religious, and experiential activities, crafts, games, sports, and mentally stimulating activities/technology use. Social-private activities were reported most often (68%), followed by mentally stimulating activities (60%). The total number of activities was strongly positively correlated with cognitive functioning, and negatively correlated with depression. Regression analyses revealed that more health-related restrictions and less engagement in religious and social-public activities were associated with higher depression, while higher engagement in social-private activities and technology use were linked with higher cognitive functioning. In sum, despite their advanced age, centenarians stay engaged in various activities, with higher engagement being associated with better well-being and cognitive functioning.

RELIGIOUS SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT AND VALUATION OF LIFE IN PORTUGUESE CENTENARIANS

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In very advanced age, successful aging becomes more and more difficult, for instance because age-related losses challenge the possibility to remaining socially engaged. This study analyzes the activity engagement patterns of Portuguese centenarians and its relation with well-being. A sample of 89 centenarians (Mage = 101.1 years, SD = 1.4, range: 100–105) from the PT100 Oporto Centenarian Study was considered. Results demonstrated that the majority of the centenarians performed religious activities (94.4%), with 80 individuals (89.9%) praying and 34 (38.2%) going to the church. Regression analyses indicated that religious social engagement was related to Valuation of Life, even when the contribution of health (i.e., diagnosis and ADL) was considered. In sum, findings point to the salience of spirituality in well-being in centenarians and to further explore the contribution of transcendence for capturing social successful aging phenomena in centenarians.

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REHABILITATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

EFFECTS OF A HOME-BASED REHABILITATION PROGRAM ON HEALTH-RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE

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