

Effects of Training Characteristics of the Elderly to Their Family Members on Changing Attitudes of Family Members in Floverjan Region

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ABSTRACT

The elderly has been always an important issue at the world and hence, research scopes have never neglected it and protecting and caring after the elderly is one of the most important functions of family. Most of the supports received by the elderly are on behalf of their families. This study is conducted with the aim of determining the effect of training characteristics of the elderly to the family members on changing their attitudes using semi-empirical method in kind of pretest-posttest. Statistical population of this study consists of all family members of Floverjan City with the aged people in their homes. For this purpose, 60 families were selected and were placed in two groups with 30 people in each group using available random method. To test hypotheses, mean difference of pretest and posttest of two experimental and control groups were evaluated using independent t-test and paired t-test and Shapiro-Wilk's test. Moreover, the mentioned calculations are done in SPSS-19 software. Obtained results from statistical analysis showed that training characteristics of the elderly has positive effect on changing attitude of their family members in terms of cognitive and behavioral aspects; although the effect was insignificant in emotional aspect.

KEY WORDS: elderly, training, family, attitude

INTRODUCTION

The slope of increase in number of the elderly in Iran has exceeded even the slope of increase in number of the elderly at the world; it means that the age pyramid of Iran would become cylindrical till 2050. Hence, the conditions are more sensitive than considering the issue of elderly and the ageing from traditional perspective¹. Sense of loneliness, isolation and disappointment are the most common complaints among the elderly. The problems and losses of aging and approaching the reality of death may lead them toward meaninglessness in life². Sense of loneliness is a complicated series of feelings, cognitions, distresses and experiences of negative emotions, which can be resulted from individual perceived deficits in personal and social relationships³.

Sanli (2014) has conducted a study under the title of opinions of Teacher Training Students on the elderly in family and has investigated the opinions of the students and has asked them about caring after the elderly at home by children, use of consultation for family of the elderly for decision making and caring after the elderly at The Homes for the Aged. They mentioned in the results that Teacher Training students play vital role in improvement of type of attitude of future generation to the elderly, since they are involved in training children and children can play key role in social structure.

One of the most important challenges against the elderly at the current world is feelings of loneliness and meaninglessness in life. Attitudes and beliefs of individuals about outcomes of their behaviors could be specified through evaluating the results and attitude (perceptions, feelings and beliefs) to the elderly can be a determinant issue for health and improvement of the aged people.⁴ The more positive feelings and attitudes of individuals to the elderly are, the more satisfying life would be created for them.⁵

Ageing

Ageing is a stage of natural process of life. More simply, people over 65 years old could be regarded as aged people. Although calendar age is used usually as a principle to present many services, screenings and researches, clinical experiences and studies show that such decisions are not significantly reliable. The elderly people are not in a similar and homogeneous group and have considerably different abilities.⁶

1 Bagheri and Akbari zadeh, Hatami, 2012

2 Avcikurt, N., Deveci, 2012

3 Wiseman, H et al, 2006

4 Tsai, 2010

5 Stephens, 2000

6 Taherkhani, 2014

In fact, definition of ageing is not easy, since ageing is on one hand a biological phenomenon, based on which physical configuration of people show certain specifications and at the same time, is it along with a series of mental outputs. Hence, some behavioral disorders are certainly regarded as characteristics of ageing. Now, it has been cleared that assessment of biological or mental aspects of people can be fruitless separated from each other; since each aspect can affect the other one and the mutual impact is particularly clear about ageing. Hence, the study of ageing and elderly should be done completely and comprehensively.⁷

Family and the elderly

Family is the best environment to guarantee comfort and mental peace of the elderly people; although sometimes lack of approaching to maturity of children or lack of accepting responsibility by force, change in role of family, existing crises, mental pressures of modern life, weakness of faith and similar issues can weaken social base of the elderly people and can result in showing misbehavior by family members to the elderly.⁸

Today, most of the psychological abnormalities and mental health problems are resulted from disrupted relations, disputes and conflicts in family and inability to solve life problems. Adequate interactions in healthy family can help more stable social-individual adjustment and adaptability of family members.⁹ The sharp rise in elderly population in developed and underdeveloped countries can create serious problems in all countries of the world.¹⁰

Attitude

Attitude refers to a series of cognitive, emotional and behavioral elements. The definition that is presented by fans of cognitive theory and is today accepted by many social psychologists says that each attitude is not only an evaluation (or emotional judgment) or readiness for response, but also attitude is a combination with both cognitive element (information of individuals about subject of attitude) and emotional element (emotional judgment of person about subject of attitude) and also readiness for response or behavior.¹¹

As family is regarded as the most important factor for social support and the subject of attitude to the elderly people and ageing is depended on numerous factors such as organization of services of supplying healthcare services and other services, achievements of this attitude can't be borrower from other cultures.¹²

Therefore, the first step to improve performance is to identify proper effectiveness of educations. There is no doubt that no organization has been able to meet all needs of individuals and the society with its wide subsets.¹³

Hence, effect of the educations should be investigated more than before. Therefore, the research question is that can training characteristics of the elderly to their families affect change in attitude of the family members to the elderly?¹⁴

Research objectives

- 1- To determine effectiveness of training characteristics of the elderly people in changing attitude of their family members
- 2- Assessment of effectiveness of training characteristics of the elderly on changing emotional aspect of attitude of their family members
- 3- To investigate effectiveness of training characteristics of the elderly in changing cognitive aspect of attitude of their family members
- 4- Assessing effectiveness of characteristics of the elderly in changing behavioral attitude of their family members

Research hypothesis are formed as follows:

1. Training characteristics of the elderly people can affect changing attitude of their family members
2. Training characteristics of the can change emotional aspect of attitude of their family members
3. Training characteristics of the elderly can change cognitive aspect of attitude of their family members
4. Training characteristics of the elderly can change behavioral attitude of their family members

METHODOLOGY

As the main purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of training characteristics of the elderly people on changing attitude of their family members, only those family members were qualified to participate in this study, who were living in same house with the elderly as the family members. Hence, the sample was formed of

7 Mellor, 2008

8 Heravi, 2000

9 Salimi and Karimi, 2012

10 Ahmadi and Beheshti, 2011

11 Kosari, 2000

12 Foyuzat, 2013

13 Hovland, C, 1953

14 Karimi, 2008

available people and with the mentioned conditions. These people were selected from all family members like father, mother, daughter, son, son in law, daughter in law and grandchildren. For this purpose, 60 families were selected and were placed in two groups with 30 people in each group randomly. 30 people of family members with elderly people in their home were selected as experimental group and 30 people were selected as control group. Statistical population of this study consists of all family members of Flaverjan City with at least 1 aged person at home. According to the statistics of the registry, out of 1285 families in Flaverjan, only 800 families have aged people at home. Hence, sample size and sampling method was as follows:

In this study, a questionnaire is used for purpose of data collection as follows: the questionnaire was researcher-made questionnaire and was derived from Cogan's Standard Questionnaire (1993) and Sanago (2008) including two parts. First part contains demographic information and field variables and the second part contains measurement scale of attitude to the elderly people, which measures attitude of individuals based on Likert Scale. Descriptive statistics methods (frequency, percent, diagram and mean value) are used to describe and classify the data. To determine reliability of the questionnaires, Cronbach alpha is used and to test the hypotheses, mean values of differences between pretest and posttest of two experimental and control groups are measured using independent t-test, paired t-test and Shapiro-Wilk's test. Moreover, the calculations were done using SPSS-19.

Table 1: items related to aspects of scale of changing attitude

Attitude aspects	Number of items
Cognitive aspect	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Emotional aspect	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
Behavioral aspect	13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18

After getting permission of the relevant authorities, the required permission was received and then, the training sessions were hold in line with following items:

Session 1: recognizing characteristics of the elderly people

Session 2: ageing, damages and health

Session 3: recognizing social position of the elderly people

Session 4: needs of ageing period and how to meet them

Session 5: recognition of adequate relationship with the elderly people

Session 6 and 7: finding how to respect the elderly people and healthy lifestyle

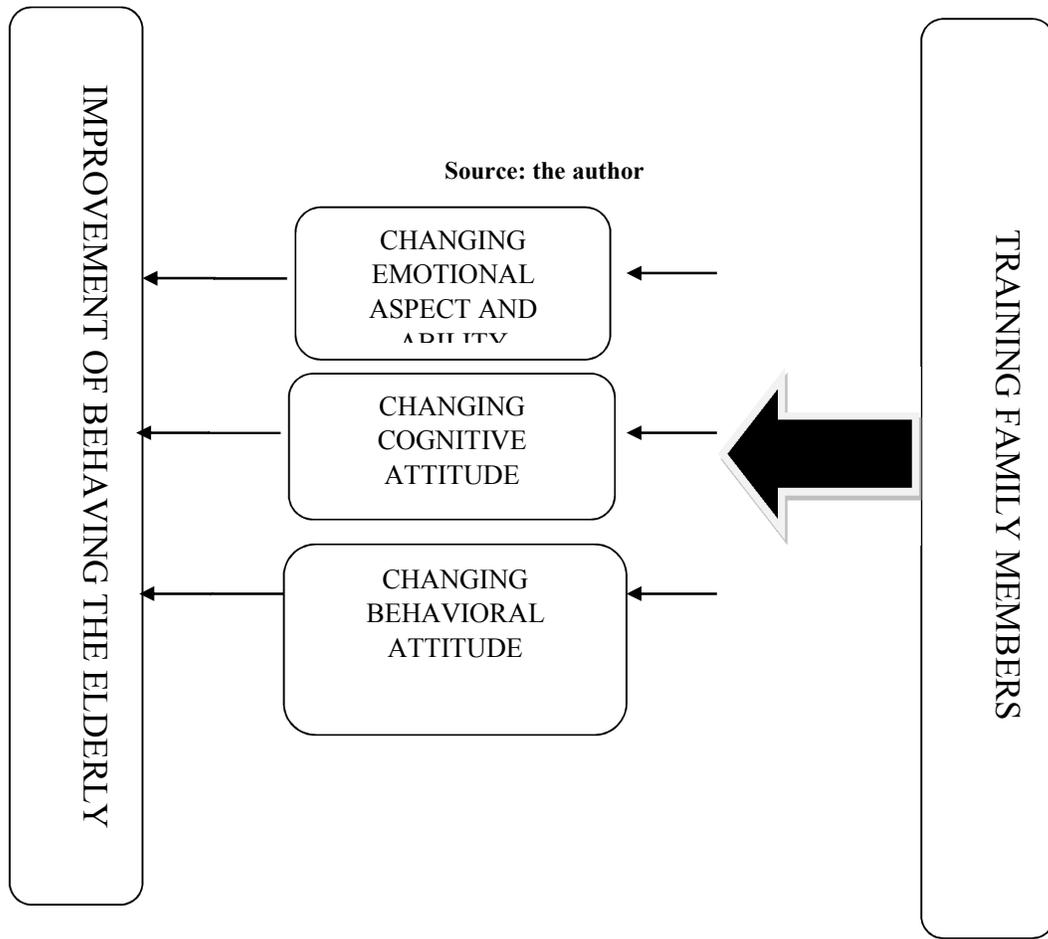
All family members were gathered together in a school in Flaverjan under the title of "Family Training Project" and two sessions were hold per week and all people had to attend the sessions.

The questionnaire was distributed among the family members in both groups before holding sessions and was then collected. Second series of the questionnaires was also fulfilled after holding training sessions for both groups.

Conceptual model of research

According to studying reliable academic works, various factors can affect training family of the elderly and changing their attitude to their behavior with the elderly. Among these works, one can refer to studies of Bayer (2007) on effect of family and social interactions with the elderly people; Lee (2004) in field of factors affecting life satisfaction of the elderly people; Nayagam and Peterson (2010) in field of self-efficacy as a way to support self-protection of caretakers of The Home for the Aged and Siminton (1996) in field of race and ethnicity as factors affecting attitude to ageing. The common aspects among all studies are variables such as changing emotional attitude, changing cognitive attitude and changing behavioral attitude. Hence, through studying various theories, 3 very important factors are identified in regard with changing attitude and are used as conceptual model of this study.

Figure 1: conceptual model of research



Analysis of obtained results

Table 2: comparing distribution of values of variables with normal distribution in view of respondents in control group

Variables	Mean	SD	Shapiro-Wilk	Sig
Pretest of cognitive aspect	2.83	1.01	0.935	0.06
Posttest of cognitive aspect	3.98	0.65	0.956	0.24
Pretest of emotional aspect	2.70	0.90	0.945	0.12
Posttest of emotional aspect	2.11	0.73	0.954	0.22
Pretest of behavioral aspect	2.57	1.17	0.931	0.05
Posttest of behavioral aspect	1.64	0.66	0.936	0.06
Total pretest	2.70	0.50	0.974	0.65
Total posttest	2.58	0.39	0.981	0.84

Table 3: comparing distribution of values of variables with normal distribution in view of respondents in experimental group

Variables	Mean	SD	Shapiro-Wilk	Sig
Pretest of cognitive aspect	1.63	0.36	0.963	0.38
Posttest of cognitive aspect	2.13	0.52	0.934	0.06
Pretest of emotional aspect	1.70	0.43	0.926	0.04
Posttest of emotional aspect	1.69	0.53	0.923	0.03
Pretest of behavioral aspect	1.56	0.50	0.911	0.02
Posttest of behavioral aspect	1.87	0.32	0.923	0.03
Total pretest	1.63	0.31	0.948	0.15
Total posttest	1.89	0.25	0.948	0.15

According to tables 2 and 3, reported p-value for entire questionnaire and cognitive aspect is higher than 0.05. Hence, the variables have normal distribution. On the contrary, normality hypothesis is not provided for emotional and behavioral aspects and hence, these variables have not normal distribution.

According to consistency of the data with normality hypothesis, the adequate method to test hypotheses is paired t-test. Moreover, to compare values of two groups, independent t-test is used.

Table 4: descriptive statistics of values of elderly family attitude

Group	Time	Number	Mean	SD
Control	Before intervention	30	1.37	0.17
	After intervention	30	1.40	0.18
Experimental	Before intervention	30	1.63	0.31
	After intervention	30	1.89	0.25

Table 5: results of paired t-test for values of elderly family attitude

Group	Variable	Mean	SD	t-stat	df	p-value
Control	The difference between before and after intervention	0.03	0.25	0.65	29	0.52
Experimental	The difference between before and after intervention	0.26	0.42	3.49	29	0.002

Table 6: results of independent t-test for values of elderly family attitude

Variable	Mean	Std. error	t-stat	df	p-value
Difference between two groups in pretest	0.26	0.06	4.06	58	>0.001
Difference between two groups in posttest	0.50	0.06	8.87	58	>0.001

According to reported p-value, it could be observed that attitude of family of the elderly people is not significantly different before and after intervention in control group; although value of experimental group in posttest has been significantly different from pretest and hence, the hypothesis is confirmed. It means that training characteristics of the elderly people can have positive effect on changing attitude of the family members.

According to lack of assumption of normality, nonparametric equivalents of paired t-test and independent t-test (Wilcoxon and Mann Whitney tests) are used.

Table 7: descriptive statistics of values of emotional aspect of elderly families

Group	Time	Number	Mean	SD
Control	Before intervention	30	1.52	0.39
	After intervention	30	1.51	0.30
Experimental	Before intervention	30	1.70	0.43
	After intervention	30	1.69	0.53

Table 8: results of Wilcoxon test for emotional aspect of families of the elderly people

Group	Variable	Mean	SD	Wilcoxon test	p-value
Control	The difference between before and after intervention	-0.01	0.48	0.16	0.87
Experimental	The difference between before and after intervention	-0.01	0.64	0.09	0.93

According to reported p-value, it could be observed emotional aspect of family of the elderly people is not significantly different before and after intervention in both control and experimental groups and hence, this hypothesis is rejected. It means that training characteristics of the elderly people can't affect changing emotional attitude of the family members.

Table 9: results of Mann Whitney Test for values of emotional attitude of family of the elderly people

Variable	Mean	Std. error	z-stat	p-value
Difference between two groups in pretest	0.18	0.09	1.72	0.08
Difference between two groups in posttest	0.18	0.10	1.40	0.16

Table 9 shows that values of pretest and posttest are same in two control and experimental groups. According to confirmation of normality of distribution for cognitive aspect, paired t-test and independent t-test are used.

Table 10: descriptive statistics of values of cognitive aspect of elderly families

Group	Time	Number	Mean	SD
Control	Before intervention	30	1.53	0.36
	After intervention	30	1.29	0.19
Experimental	Before intervention	30	1.63	0.36
	After intervention	30	2.13	0.52

Table 11: results of paired t-test for values of cognitive attitude of families

Group	Variable	Mean	SD	t-stat	df	p-value
Control	The difference between before and after intervention	-0.24	0.41	3.17	29	0.004
Experimental	The difference between before and after intervention	0.49	4.27	0.09	29	<0.001

According to reported p-value, it could be observed that cognitive aspect of families of the elderly people in pretest has been significantly different from posttest in both groups, with the difference that it has been significantly decreased in control group because of lack of no training and has been significantly increased in experimental group because of training sessions. As a result, this hypothesis is confirmed. It means that training characteristics of the elderly can affect cognitive attitude of their family members positively.

Table 12: results of independent t-test for values of cognitive attitude of families

Variable	Mean	Std. error	t-stat	df	p-value
Difference between two groups in pretest	0.10	0.09	1.07	29	0.29
Difference between two groups in posttest	0.83	0.10	8.21	29	<0.001

Although values of pretest between two groups have not been significantly different, posttest values of experimental group has been significantly higher than control group that can be a confirmation on the hypothesis. In order to test the mentioned hypothesis, according to rejection of normality, nonparametric equivalent of paired t-test and independent t-test (Wilcoxon and Mann Whitney Tests) is used.

Table 13: descriptive statistics of values of behavioral attitude of elderly families

Group	Time	Number	Mean	SD
Control	Before intervention	30	1.29	0.24
	After intervention	30	1.56	0.50
Experimental	Before intervention	30	1.39	0.35
	After intervention	30	1.87	0.32

Table 14: results of Wilcoxon test for values of behavioral attitude of families

Group	Variable	Mean	SD	Wilcoxon test	p-value
Control	The difference between before and after intervention	0.10	0.48	0.99	0.32
Experimental	The difference between before and after intervention	0.21	0.58	2.63	0.008

According to reported p-value, it could be observed that behavioral attitude of families has not been significantly different in pretest and posttest in control group; although posttest values of experimental group have been significantly different from the pretest and hence, the hypothesis is confirmed. It means that training characteristics of the elderly people can affect changing behavioral attitude of the family members.

Table 15: results of Mann Whitney Test for values of behavioral attitude of family of the elderly people

Variable	Mean	Std. error	z-stat	p-value
Difference between two groups in pretest	0.26	0.10	1.93	0.053
Difference between two groups in posttest	0.47	0.09	4.54	<0.001

Table 15 shows similarity of pretest values of both groups; although it shows that posttest experimental group is significantly higher than posttest value of control group. As a result, the hypothesis is confirmed.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to obtained results from this study, attitude of family members of the elderly people has not been significantly different in pretest and posttest of control group; although the values of posttest of experimental group have been significantly higher than its pretest values and hence, this hypothesis is confirmed. It means that training characteristics of the elderly people can have positive effect on changing attitude of family members of the elderly people and shows that effect of training on changing attitude of family members is significant in experimental group. It refers to effect of training characteristics of the elderly people on changing attitude of family members and the H₀ is rejected.

Emotional attitude of family members has not been significantly different in pretest and posttest in both groups and hence, the hypothesis is rejected. It means that training characteristics of the elderly people can't affect changing emotional attitude of family members. Matin (2013) have conducted a study under the title of assessing the effect of training on improvement of quality of life in the elderly people under coverage of Tehran's Culture House for the Aged. The study showed that there is significant difference between total value of quality of life of the elderly people of control and experimental groups. Moreover, some training elements including attitude

motivating factors, enabling factors and behavioral factors could affect quality of life significantly. Also, assessment of motivating structure of awareness and empowerment factors on quality of life showed no significant effect. In fact, it could be mentioned that the obtained results showed that through training people through precede model, quality of life of elderly people could be increased.

In line with this finding, it could be mentioned that the elderly people form a class of society that respecting them is among Islamic and religious duties of Iranian community. In terms of society and family, the elderly people can be the contact point of individuals because of their characteristics. Under current conditions of Iran, grandparents are still a focus point for formation of family gathering and the relationships would be empowered by them. In religious terms, the issue of the elderly has different space. In Islamic view, the elderly people are the mediator for divine gift. The interpretation of "You forgiver of great Sheikh" in prayers shows that the elderly is under forgiveness and kindness of God specially and hence, they can be an instrument to attract divine kindness for others.

There are numerous verses about being good to parents and the need to protect their rights and the consequences of ignoring those rights. Children, provided that having proper belief, consider this goodness and a duty. Although the Almighty God has emphasized goodness to parents in different Surahs of Quran and has advised the children to be good to their parents along with worshiping the God, emotional attitude has been optimized according to religious educations and law of the society. Accordingly, the educations can't improve emotional attitudes.

Cognitive attitude of family members of the elderly people has been significantly different in pretest and posttest of both groups with the difference that it has been decreased in control group and has been increased significantly in experimental group. As a result, the hypothesis is confirmed. It means that training characteristics of the elderly people can have positive effect on changing cognitive attitudes of their family members.

Comparing mean value of the groups showed that effect of training on changing cognitive attitude is significant; meaning that the H₀ is rejected. Hence, the hypothesis is confirmed and it is found that training the characteristics of the elderly people can affect changing cognitive attitude of their family members.

According to lack of information and awareness of families about the elderly people and familiarity with physiologic and mental and psychological changes of elderly people, training the family members can play vital role in improvement of type of cognitive attitude of family to the elderly people. This is because; negative attitude of people in family is because of lack of recognizing characteristics and conditions of the elderly people. Hence, it could be found that training can affect changing attitude of individuals.

In control group, behavioral attitude of family members of the elderly people has not been significantly different in pretest and posttest; although the posttest value of experimental group has been significantly higher than pretest value and hence, the hypothesis is confirmed. It means that training characteristics of the elderly people can have positive effect on changing attitudes.

According to obtained results, effect of training characteristics of the elderly people on behavioral attitude of their family member is significant and shows effect of training characteristics of the elderly people on changing behavioral attitude of their family members and hence, the hypothesis is confirmed.

Although cognitive and emotional trainings are important to change the attitude, if the behavior with the elderly people by family is inadequate and the educations are not used in practice, the training would be useless. Hence, training courses of having good behavior with the elderly people can complement cognitive and emotional trainings. As a result, it could be mentioned that emotional and cognitive trainings can result in change in behavior and through these training courses of manner of behaving the elderly people, the ultimate goal that is changing attitude to the elderly people would be realized.

Applied suggestions

- Relevant training courses of changing lifestyle and advantages and usefulness of the elderly people in family should be hold for the family members of the elderly people based on their psychological properties.
- To support changing l\style of living with the elderly people, required facilities should be provided for families.
- New and academic thoughts in relation with the elderly people should be provided for families continuously
- The times of being with the elderly people should be changed into enjoyable times for family members through informing them and training them

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