



EXAMINING THE AGING PHENOMENON IN TERMS OF GENDER VARIABLE AND THE EFFECT OF THE MEDIA

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Abstract:

The aging phenomenon, which threatens a great section of the world population and constitutes a risk group, may affect the feelings of men and women related to aging and the elderly. As the necessity and importance of discussing the problems caused by the biopsychosocial changes associated with the aging phenomenon have increased day by day, in this study the subjective well-being levels and perceptions on aging in terms of the variable of gender were determined. The current study employed the field survey method aiming to explore phenomena in their natural conditions. A total of 266 participants participated in different age groups in the study. Two data collection tools were used in the current study. The first data collection tool is an interview form consisting of a total of 4 questions designed to investigate how aging is perceived; the second data collection tool is wellbeing scale. The comments that have been subject to descriptive analysis are experienced. The results revealed that the male and female participants generally perceived the old age as a negative situation. It was observed that the situation felt annoyed by both groups in the aging process was the biological changes. The second negative situation for the participants is the psychological anxieties related to aging. As a result, although they are from different age groups and gender, the participants are considered as aging, biological, psychological and social change complexity. The media is an important element in the formation of this negative situation by making more fearful and worrying publications about physical changes related to age or aging.

Keywords: aging, old age, the media and aging, subjective well-being and aging

1. Introduction

The increase in the life quality as a result of the advancements in technology and in medicine has extended the average life expectancy. It is expected that the ratio of the

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population aged 65 years and over to total population would increase to 17.9% in Turkey in 2050 (Turkstat, 2016). The studies reveal that the aging world population is not limited only with the industrialized countries but it is a process that is also observed in the developing countries. Therefore, the old age problems existing in the countries with intense elderly population also make gradually themselves evident in Turkish society. Old age is perceived as both an individual issue and a social problem (Klavuz, 2003).

When the aging theories are examined, it may be seen that they are gathered under three main titles. *The Biological Theories* define the old age as a situation in which the hormone balance of the body becomes unbalanced, the cell renewal slows down, the effect of the immune system of the body goes down and, more importantly, and there is fighting against not only the foreign organisms but also the substances included in its own organic structure.

The Social Aging Theories interpret the old age as a period in which social interaction reduces to the minimum level and the community has no expectation from the old person anymore as a result of gradually reduction of the activity. *The Psychological Theories* argue that many people have unsatisfied desires in the old age but it is dangerous that they look back and they should have an aim for the future. According to Jung, a theorist who supports the psychological theories, that is why all the divine religions promise a life also after death and people should have a goal in the second part of their lives (Onur, 2000). The common point that all the theories have taken as a basis is the view that the old age is the product of a complex, psychological, and social process and it is affected by many different factors like the social, psychomotor, cognitive or physical changes (Göktaş et al., 2010).

Levy et al., in their study, determined that the attitude towards the old age was one of the important determinants of the healthy aging and if the old age perception was positive, the subjective, mental health and the health behaviors of the old people were affected positively. When the aim in life is thought, it is accepted that many activities are performed to be happy. In recent years, as a reaction to the psychopathological approaches, the positive psychology, a new approach that investigates the psychological power of the human nature and aims to help the individual in struggling with the negative characteristics and feelings and to increase his/her well-being, has come into existence (Yavuz, 2006). Upon the effect of this development, that the happiness means more than an emotional statement, for example, that it is an indicator of the quality of life, have started to be learned and taught, the comparative studies of the subjective well-being levels of the communities have accelerated (Diener and Suh, 2000; Saygın and Aslan, 2009; Carruthers and Hood, 2004).

According to Diener (1994), the subjective well-being is defined as the existence of the positive affectivity and the absence of the negative affectivity, with the cognitive evaluation of the individual about his/her life. The subjective well-being has two components: emotional and cognitive. According to Myers and Diener (1995), there is a third component called as the life satisfaction in addition to these two components

(Cited by; Özen 2010). In the positive affective dimension of the subjective well-being known as well-being, feelings like joy, excitement, pride, hope, interest, wakefulness, and confidence are included; on the other hand, , the feelings like sadness, guilt, hatred, and anger are included in the negative affectivity dimension. And in the third dimension, the life satisfaction dimension involves the satisfaction feeling and the evaluations of the individual related to several areas of life. In order to state that the subjective well-being level of the individual is high, his/her life satisfaction should be high and he/she should experience the positive feelings frequently and the negative feelings less (Eryılmaz, 2010). In the recent years, there is a non-ignorable factor in the formation of these perceptions and in the positive or negative development of the people's subjective well-being. This factor is the media and the advertisements used in the media. When the fact that the world population will get older in the future is taken into consideration, the old age should be evaluated as not only reaching to a specific life or going beyond a specific age but also a biological, psychological and social change complexity. The elderly stereotypes used in the magazines and the advertisements affect not only the feelings of the old people about themselves but also the feelings of the young people about aging and the old people. The need and the importance to address the problems caused by the biopsychosocial changes associated with the aging phenomenon, which threatens a great part of the world population and forms a risk group, have increased day by day (Bakış, 2002).

This age can be stated as an "Age of Adoring for The Youth and The Beauty". That is, the old age is considered as an unwanted process that should be delayed. The effect of the media in particular is undeniable in the formation of these feelings and many other perceptions (Mcconatha, 2003) The elderly in the media and popular culture, which are a part of daily life, are often not adequately represented and, as they are ignored, they are gathered together under the title of "old" and can be identified with negative characteristics such as degrading health, happiness and attractiveness, humiliating, unhealthy, ugly, greedy, grumpy, desperate victims and childlike (Walker, 2015; [Dionigi](#), 2015). The stereotypes formed in the media affect the views on aging and the way of interaction with these individuals and also play a strong role in the society on how the old people should live. These implicit stereotypes provided by the media out of the conscious awareness may cause dramatic effects in various areas. In their study, Levy et al., (1996) determined that subliminal messages with positive or negative messages to the old people were given while playing computer games and they investigated their effects. In the study where the memory was measured, it was observed that the old people who were exposed to positive messages related to old age displayed a better performance and the old people who were exposed to negative messages displayed a worse performance (Cited by; Horton et al., 2007).

Until a few years ago, the women were anxious about the effects of the aging, it is stated that men also feel this anxiety strongly. It has been mentioned by the aestheticians that number of the aesthetical interventions performed for the several parts of the body in women and men have increased day by day, especially in the last 10-15 years. According to the survey conducted by the International Society of Aesthetic

Plastic Surgery (ISAPS) with the participation of 31.894 plastic surgeons from the continents of Asia, Europe, North and South America, Africa and Oceania, America is ranked as the first in the number of the plastic surgeries applied, which is followed by Mexico, Brazil, Canada, Argentina, and Spain. It is stated that women and men are at around 88% and 12%, respectively in the world average. [About](#) 50 thousand aesthetic operations [are](#) performed per year in Turkey (ISAPS, 2016). Women continue to drive the demand for cosmetic procedures, accounting for 86.2%, or 20,362,655 cosmetic procedures worldwide. The five most popular procedures requested by women are Breast Augmentation (Silicone Implant), Liposuction, Eyelid Surgery, Abdominoplasty and Breast Lift. In 2016, men accounted for 13.8% of cosmetic patients with 3,264,254 procedures performed worldwide (ISAPS, 2018). When considering the view that the old age is a product of a complex, psychological and social process and it is affected by many different factors like social, psychomotor, cognitive or physical changes, it is a need to investigate whether or not the attitude towards the old age is one of the important determinants of healthy aging and whether or not the subjective, mental health and the health behaviors of the old people are affected positively, in case that the old age perception is positive.

It was aimed to investigate;

- 1) How the old age is perceived in terms of gender,
- 2) How the media directs the old age perception of individuals in terms of gender,
- 3) Why the idea of getting old causes anxiety in terms of gender,
- 4) Did participants with and without the aging anxiety perform any practice to eliminate these anxieties in terms of gender? Will participants with and without the aging anxiety have any practice to be performed to eliminate these anxieties in terms of gender?
- 5) Whether or not the subjective well-being levels of the participants with and without the aging anxiety and gender vary based on.

2. Methods

2.1. Research Model

The current study employed the field survey method aiming to explore phenomena in their natural conditions.

2.2. Study Group

The population of this study for quantitative dimension and the survey models consisted of totally 266 participants (98 men and 168 women), who were residing in Kars, can be reached randomly, and were from different age groups. The random cluster sampling method was chosen to determine the sample of the study.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

In this study, the Psychological Well-Being Scale and four open-ended questions were used.

A. The Psychological Well-Being Scale

There are 84 items in the scale which was developed by Ryff in 1989 and adapted into Turkish by Cenkseven in 2004. The scale was developed to measure the 6 dimensions of the psychological well-being. 1) autonomy-independence, personal stability, 2) environmental mastery - the ability of the person to manage his/her life, 3) personal development - to be open to new experiences 4) positive relations with others – getting satisfaction from the relations, 5) the purposes in life - the belief of a person that his/her life is meaningful 6) self-acceptance - having positive attitudes about himself/herself and his/her past.

B. The Quantitative Data Collection Tool

A total of 4 questions were asked to the participants in order to investigate how the old age is perceived by gender and how the media directs the old age perception of the individuals. These are:

- 1) How do you describe the old age?
- 2) How are the elderly mentioned in the media?
- 3) Does the idea of getting old cause anxiety for you? Why?
- 4) Did you perform any practice to eliminate these anxieties? Will you have any practice to be performed to eliminate these anxieties?

2.4. Data Analysis

The first part of the study, the data were obtained from 4 open-ended questions in order to investigate how the old age is perceived: How do you define the old age? How does the media mention the old age? Does the idea of getting old cause anxiety for you? Why? Did you perform any practice to eliminate these anxieties? Will you have any practice to be performed to eliminate these anxieties? Each researcher coded the answers, obtained as a result of asking questions, under the themes. The same process was repeated by discontinuing the study for a while. The results obtained from the study were converted into tables. These are the research themes: Psychological changes, Psychological (physical-mental) changes, Change in the social roles changes, Psychological/Physiological changes, Change in the psychological/social roles changes, Social/physiological changes and these themes are classified according to positive negative and neutral expressions. In the other part of the study wellbeing scale was applied and the data obtained from the scale were analyzed with the SPSS program.

3. Results

Table 1: Total the themes used by the male and female participants for describing the old age

	Psychological changes(f)	Psychological changes (physical-mental) (f)	Change in the social roles changes (f)	Psychological/Physiological changes (f)	Change in the psychological/social roles changes (f)	Social/physiological changes (f)	Total
Negative (Male)	25	38	3	19	4	0	89
Positive (Male)	4	2	7	0	13	0	26
Neutral (Male)	2	20	1	4	5	0	32
Negative (Female)	2	172	7	7	13	17	218
Positive (Female)	2	1	3	0	16	0	22
Neutral (Female)	5	5	4	4	9	0	27
Total	40	238	25	34	60	17	414

Negative The Themes Used by the Male

Psychological changes: Giving up many things in his/her life f(4), Having no young soul f(4), Giving up everything f(2), Unexcited f(2), Worsening mood f(2), Burnout f(1), Hopelessness f(1), Blasé (1), Forgetting how to dance (1), Feeling tired in life f(1), Alienated from life (1), Being Bad-tempered f(1), Behaving childishly f(1), Psychological breakdown f(1), Being satisfied with life f(1), The years passed f(1).

Psychological (physical-mental) changes: Being wrinkled f(8), Inadequate in physical functions f(6), The collapse of body and brain f(4), limp and helpless f(4), Health problems f(3), Demented f(2) Running out of energy f(2), hair greying f(2), Not being able to go out at will f(2), Being at death's door f(2) Shortening f(1), Incurable disease f(1), With walking stick f(1).

Change in the social roles changes: Being retired f(1), Nosy parker f(1), Disgrace f(1).

Psychological/physiological changes: End of life f(9), Not being able to meet his/her own needs f(8), Waiting for death f(2).

Change in the psychological/social roles changes: Belatedness f(1), Monotonous life f(1), Loneliness

Negative The Themes Used by the Female

Psychological changes: Loneliness f(5), The exhaustion of soul f(3), Tastelessness f(1), Death of happiness f(1), Tired of life f(1), Lazy f(1).

Psychological (physical-mental) changes: Wrinkled hands and face f(38), Grey hair f(18), Impairment of health f(13), Spent force f(13), Breakdown f(11), Disease f(9), Physical fatigue f(8), Hump f(8), Getting ugly f(7), Having one foot in the grave f(6), Over the hill f(6), Not being able to walk f(2), With walking stick f(2), Deformation of face and body f(2), Not being beautiful anymore f(2), Losing teeth f(2), Shortening f(2), Slowdown of body functions f(2), Tiredness of years f(2), Not being able to see f(1), Back pain f(1), Hair loss f(1), Incapable of working f(1), Knee pain f(1), Not being well-groomed f(1), Sagged body f(1), Exhaustion of body f(1), Shivering f(1), Bending of bones f(1).

Change in the social roles changes: Staying home f(2), The one who is not wanted by brides f(1), Dereliction f(1), Being ridiculed by young people f(1).

Psychological/physiological changes: Unable to do his/her own work f(3), Mentally depressed people as they know they are ugly f(2), Distressed people

f(1), Fall f(1).

f(1), Demented f(1),
Change in the psychological/social roles changes:
Keeping his/her hands off (elderly) f(8), Nothing to
do for the humanity f(2), Childishness f(2),
Disengaging of life f(1),
Social/physiological changes: Dependent f(14), Not
being able to perform many of his/her duties f(2),
Not being able to do many things you have done
when you are young f(1).

Positive The Themes Used by the Male

Psychological changes: Peace f(2), Enjoying life f(1),
Well-groomed attentive f(1).

Psychological (physical-mental) changes:
Beauty f(2).

Change in the social roles changes: Pretty f(3),
Allocating time for family f(1), Head of a family
f(1), Ending of the youth problems f(1),
Plentifulness f(1).

Change in the psychological/social roles changes:
Experience/Maturity f(11), Peaceful period f(1),
Using the time well f(1).

Neutral The Themes Used by the Male

Psychological changes: Life experiences f(2).

Psychological (physical-mental) changes: Over the age
of 60 f(5), Over the age of 50 f(4), Growing old f(4),
Over the age of 45 f(1), A period of life f(6).

Change in the social roles changes: Retirement f(1)

Psychological/physiological changes: Progressing
physically and spiritually f(4).

Change in the psychological/social roles changes: The
fragile stage of life f(1), Being religious f(4).

Positive The Themes Used by the Female

Psychological changes: Peace f(1), Innocence f(1).

Psychological (physical-mental) changes: Good thing if
there are no health problems f(1).

Change in the social roles changes: Helping to his/her
children and grandchildren f(1), Treated with
honor by brides f(1), Fits for someone f(1).

Change in the psychological/social roles changes:
Maturity/Experience f(11), Prettiness f(4), Satisfied
with life f(1).

Neutral The Themes Used by The Female

Psychological changes: Inevitable f(5).

Psychological (physical-mental) changes: Over the age
of 60 f(9), Spending of most of life f(2), A natural
process f(2), Over the age of 40 f(1), Living for
many years f(1).

Change in the social roles changes: Having children
and grandchildren f(4), Retired f(2).

Psychological/physiological changes: Aging but having
the soul young f(3), Not being able resist to time
f(1).

Change in the psychological/social roles changes:
Ending of youth/childhood f(3), worldly-wise f(2),
Being religious f(2), Experiencing the difficulties
and beauties of life(1), Commandment of Allah(1).

According to the results, a great majority of the male participants perceived the old age negatively. Especially the biological changes in the aging process were expressed as the most negative dimension of the aging. The other negatively perceived dimensions of the aging process were the psychological changes and the change of the social roles, respectively. When examining the neutral themes used by the male participants for defining the aging, it was remarkable that they evaluated the old age as the chronological age. Those, who evaluated the aging positively, mostly defined it with expressions like maturation or experience. When the results are examined in terms of female participants, it is also seen that the old age is negatively perceived. Especially the biological changes in the old age process were stated as the most negative dimension of the aging through the expressions like "having one foot in the grave, limited movements,

bagful drugs, weakness, exhaustion of the body energy, unattractive people, and dependent". The other negatively perceived dimensions of the aging process were the social/physiological changes and the change of the psychological/social roles, respectively. It was remarkable that the female participants have not used too much neutral expression while describing the old age. Those, who evaluated the aging positively, mostly described it with expressions like *maturation or experience*.

Table 2: Total the themes used by the male and female participants for the question "how is the elderly mentioned in the media?"

	Psychological Change (f)	Psychological (Physical-Mental) Changes(f)	Change in the Social Roles Changes(f)	Psychological/Physiological Changes(f)	Change in the Psychological/Social Roles Changes(f)	Social/Physiological Changes(f)	Total
Negative Total (Male)	5	41	15	20	17	0	98
Positive Total (Male)	0	0	16	0	5	1	22
Neutral Total (Male)	1	11	16	0	0	0	28
Negative Total (Female)	13	50	50	12	9	0	134
Positive Total (Female)	5	13	16	0	26	0	60
Neutral Total (Female)	2	7	17	0	2	0	28
Total	26	122	130	32	59	1	370

According to the results of the study, the male participants had the view that the negative characteristics of the old age are emphasized in the media. Especially, it was emphasized that the aging is introduced as a physical and mental retardation and disease. Also, it was expressed that they are presented in the media as individuals who do not bring any social benefit and are psychologically disadvantaged and non-self-sufficient. When the female participants were asked about how the image of old person is used in the media, it was expressed that models were used in the way that would cause especially the old people to be perceived negatively, especially in terms of their physiological characteristics and their place in the society. *The negative expressions like "discarded, alienated from society"* were frequently used. When the positive and neutral

expressions were examined, it was expressed that the social roles and the psychological sides of the old age were told more positively, rather than its physical side.

Table 3: The answers of the male participants for the question
"does the idea of getting old cause anxiety for you? why?"

Yes / N=22	No / N=22		
Fear of death	7	Happen all in a good time	17
I am scared of being left alone by my family	4	Every age has its own beauty	9
I do not want to be needy-indigent	2	It's a part of life.	7
I do not want to get old	2	We will all die	5
I will not be able to control my body	2	An ordinary situation	3
Anxiety of being prepared for a good future	2	There is plenty of time for it	2
Time's passing.	1	My soul is still young	2
I will lose my hair	1	I have already been living like an old person	1
I am afraid of losing my self-confidence	1	I believe I will be healthy	1
Getting old is not a good thing	1	The old age is one of the best parts of life	1
My hair will turn grey	1	From now he/she will take a rest	1
Due to the deformation of the body	2	I'm doing what I want to do.	1
Wrinkling of skin	1	Because there is no guarantee for the future	1
Difficulty starts	1		
There is emotional sensitivity	1		
Old person becomes in need of help	1		
Loneliness	3		
We will be questioned in the afterlife.	1		
Total	34		51

When the attitudes of the male participants towards the aging were examined, it was observed that they did not display a negative attitude towards the aging process, generally, they thought and accepted it as an inevitable process and therefore they expressed that they did not feel anxiety.

Table 4: The answers of the female participants for the question:
"does the idea of getting old cause anxiety for you? why?"

Yes / N=33	No / N=77		
I will get closer to death	7	One day, everybody will get old, it is inevitable	26
I am afraid of being lonely	4	Every age has its own beauty	10
I won't do what I currently do	2	My soul is younger than my age	2
I will not be able to control my body	2	I do what is necessary for a healthy life.	2
I am afraid of not being able to prepare a good future for me	2	There is plenty of time	1
Wrinkle	2	I believe in the hereafter	1
My hair will turn grey	1	I have already been living like an old person.	1
I am afraid of getting slower	1	I'm not going to wait for death	1
I will lose my hair	1	Because getting old means resting	1
Being dependent on others	1	It is good to be like children	1
Losing my self-confidence	1	A part of life	1
		Getting old is a mental condition	1
Total	24		48

When the attitudes of the female participants towards the aging were examined, it was observed that they did not display a negative attitude towards the aging process, generally, they thought and accepted it as an inevitable process and therefore they stated that they did not feel anxiety. However, when they were compared with the male participants, it was observed that the women had more anxiety about the deformation of the physical appearance or not being able have a place in the society.

Table 5: The answers of the male participants to the question
 "did you perform any practice to eliminate these anxieties?"

Yes / N=18	No /N= 92		
I do sports	4	I stay away from stress	1
Worship, belief, devotion	1	I consume vegetables and fruit	1
I have made a style research	1	No, but if it exists, I will become	1
I will have hair care	1	In this way, I am loved more	1
I take care	1	I stay away from its source to eliminate the anxiety	1
		Then We cannot know what time brings	1
		I only take care of the normal life	1
Total	8		7

A quite large part of the male participants expressed that they had no aesthetic anxieties and they would undergo any operation although they evaluated the physical changes negatively.

Table 6: The answers of the female participants to the question
 "did you perform any practice to eliminate these anxieties?"

Yes, I want to have a plastic surgery N=27	No, I do not want to have a plastic surgery N=98		
I want have an operation for my nose	4	No and too little too late	7
Doing sports	4	It will not be due to my financial situation	2
I have diet.	2	Maybe later on	3
I do skin care	3	I am against all kinds of aesthetics	1
I want to have dental treatment	3	I will be punished in the hereafter	1
Skin care	3	I am at peace with my body	1
Staying away from stress	2	Allah created	1
I take care of my nutrition	2	I am against all kinds of aesthetics	1
Botox	1	I have no anxiety	1
I want to get silicone gel breast implants	1	Because it is a sin	1
I don't like my height and my eyebrows	1		
I do body care	1		
I want to have a liposuction operation for my hips.	1		
Total	28		19

A great part of the female participants expressed that they had no anxiety about aging, and even they have, they would not undergo any operation due to their religious beliefs or financial reasons. And the ones, who stated that they had anxieties, expressed that they will be able to eliminate these anxieties with the operations related with their

physical appearance or the aesthetical applications rather than practices such as healthy life habits.

Table 7: The results of the Mann Whitney-U test performed to determine whether or not the subjective well-being level varies based on the presence of aging anxiety

The Subscales of the Subjective Well-Being Scale		N	S.T	S.O.	U	Z	sig
Positive relations With others	Yes	105	130.68	13721.00			
	No	160	134.53	21524.00	8156.000	-.400	.689
	Total	265					
Autonomy	Yes	105	126.25	13256.00	7691.000	-1.162	
	No	160	137.43	21989.00			.245
	Total	265					
Environmental mastery	Yes	105	133.44	14011.50			
	No	160	132.71	21233.50	8353.500	-.076	.939
	Total	265					
Personal Development	Yes	105	128.76	13520.00	7955.000		
	No	160	135.78	21725.00		-.729	.466
	Total	265					
Purposes in Life	Yes	105	127.56	13393.50	7828.500	-.937	
	No	160	136.57	21851.50			.349
	Total	265					
Self-acceptance	Yes	105	139.22	14618.50			
	No	160	128.92	20626.50	7746.500	-1.071	.284
	Total	265					
Total	Yes	105	131.07	13762.00	8197.000		
	No	160	134.27	21483.00		-.333	.739
	Total	265					

A statistically significant difference was not determined in the subjective well-being scores of the participants according to their answers to the question "Does the idea of getting old cause anxiety for you?". In other words, the existence of the anxiety about the aging did not cause a difference in the subjective well-being level.

Table 8: The results of the Mann Whitney-U test performed to determine whether or not the subjective well-being scale varies based on gender

		Gender	N	S.T	S.O.	U	Z	sig
Positive relations With others	Male		98	153.88	15080.00	6235.000	-3.300	.001*
	Female		168	121.61	20431.00			
	Total		266					
Autonomy	Male		98	138.15	13538.50	7776.500	-.753	.451
	Female		168	130.79	21972.50			
	Total		266					
Environmental Mastery	Male		98	131.90	12926.50	8075.500	-.259	.796
	Female		168	134.43	22584.50			
	Total		266					
Personal Development	Male		98	153.99	15091.00	6224.000	-3.318	.001*
	Female		168	121.55	20420.00			
	Total		266					

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Purposes in Life	Male	98	151.79	14875.00	6440.000	-2.962	.003*
	Female	168	122.83	20636.00			
	Total	266					
Self-acceptance	Male	98	142.92	14006.00	7309.000	-1.525	.127
	Female	168	128.01	21505.00			
	Total	266					
Total	Male	98	147.18	14423.50	6891.500	-2.215	.027*
	Female	168	125.52	21087.50			
	Total	266					

When the subjective well-being scores were examined by gender, it was observed that the men had higher subjective well-being levels in the scores of the subscales of positive relations with others, personal development, purposes in life and in total scores compared to the women.

4. Discussion

According to the results of this study, the old age may be evaluated as a biological, psychological, and social change complexity. The most prominent result of the study was that both the male and female participants defined the old age as impairment of the body, slowing down of the cell renewal, and losing of the effect of the immune system of the body in time. Similar results were obtained from a study conducted by Mcconatha et al., (2004) based on a comparison between the young and middle-aged adults who came from the United States of America and Turkey. In terms of the attitudes towards aging, it was found that the Turkish participants had more anxiety about aging psychologically. It was determined that the American and Turkish female participants were more anxious about the physical changes related to the aging than the male participants.

Also, in the study by Mcconatha et al., (2003) the attitudes of the young adults from Germany and the USA on the old age and the elderly were analyzed. The study first evaluated the similarities and differences of four measurable dimensions that cause anxiety related to the age discrimination. These dimensions were determined as a) the fears of the elderly, b) the psychological anxieties about the old age c) the anxiety about the changes in physical appearance which are the natural results of the aging and d) the fear about the losses related to the old age. The second purpose of the Mcconatha's study was to determine when the young adults from these two countries feel as old. The results revealed that there were significant differences between the countries and gender dimensions. While the German participants tended to evaluate aging in a more negative way compared to the American participants, the Americans considered themselves "old" at a much more young age compared to the Germans. When gender differences were taken into consideration, it was founded that the women in both countries defined the old age as the physical appearance changes with increasing age at higher rate compared to the men. The study has the view that the positive or negative

perception of the old age is associated with the effect of cultural stereotypes (McConatha et al., 2003).

In the study conducted by İmamoğlu and İmamoğlu (1992) by using the Turkish and Sweden samples, they concluded that the Turkish participants developed more negative attitudes towards aging compared to the Swedish participants although they met more with their families and the other social circles. In the same study, it was stated that the elderly Turkish men and women had the increased dissatisfaction with the social relations and their life satisfaction decreased in the urban contexts. As seen in the results of other studies and this study, it was determined that the age discrimination or prejudiced attitudes and practices towards the old people are common.

In the study by Mcconatha et al., (2004) it was revealed that American and Turkish media broadcast more frightening and worrying programs in physical appearances associated with age. In the present study, it was aimed to receive the opinions related to how the old age is expressed in the media and the participants expressed that the aging is presented as a physically and mentally regression and disorder in the media. In other words, according to the participants, the image of the old person was used negatively generally in the media and especially in advertisements. Also, they expressed that media brought up the elderly as people, who do not provide social benefits, need other people from physical and social aspects, and have financial difficulties, to the agenda. In the answers given to the question "Does the idea of getting old cause anxiety?", in general the male and female participants stated that they were not so anxious about this matter and they agreed that this process is inevitable. It was observed that the most uncomfortable situation in both groups in the aging process was defined as the physical and mental regression of the body such as the loss of the young appearance of the body and the decrease of the effect of the immune system of the body over time). But the female participants expressed more anxiety about the physical changes compared to the male participants and stated that they were more open to the aesthetical practices. And the second negative situation is the psychological anxieties related to the old age. In this dimension, the unsatisfied desires, hopelessness, and worsening mood at older ages were emphasized.

In the qualitative dimension of the study, it was thought that the attitude towards the old age was one of the important determinants of the healthy aging and in case the old age perception was positive, the subjective health and the health behaviors of the old people were affected positively. In this respect, the subjective well-being scores were examined the attitude towards the old age. According to the results, when male participants expressed more anxiety than women and they happiness levels are higher. It is meaning, aging anxiety does not have any effect on subjective well-being of persons. In addition male participants were reluctant to do any practice to delay the effects of aging and they avoided answering the questions about aging. Women have lower levels of happiness than men but they feel more positive about the application of surgery or anti-aging. This may be interpreted male participants ignoring their concerns more than women. As a result, despite the idea of aging is psychologically disturbing

and inevitable, male and female may prefer to keep away it from the level of consciousness. Especially, male participants have avoided the ageing of anxiety.

Considering the rapid aging of the world population, a positive attitude towards the inevitable aging are needed for people to be happy. In spite of the harsh realities of aging, most of us have to believe that old age is still valuable. Societies should be convinced that old age is a natural life process and it is not poverty, destruction or desperation. Especially, it is essential and obligatory that the media pays attention to the metaphors that it uses concerning the old age and it takes care of not giving messages that cause the old age to be perceived negatively. This optimistic attitude has been fueled by the Positive Psychology movement, which champions the idea that how we think about our day-to-day living shapes what it means to be happy. Now the principles of Positive Psychology are captured in a new term specific to later life—namely, "positive aging." The idea behind positive aging is that there are sources of happiness in our later years that are inherent in the processes of growing old. In other words, positive aging is not how well we're able to dodge our infirmities, but rather, our ability to focus on what makes life worthwhile in our later years in spite of the physical or mental challenges that may arise (Hill, 2007).

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