

Community Participation and its Role in the Quality of Life Among the Elderly

Sayah Rabah ¹

¹ PhD student, Department of Sociology and Demography, University of Algiers 2, Algeria

Email: rabah.sayah@univ-alger2.dz

Orcid: 0009-0001-0974-6218

Abstract---This scientific article aims to discuss the reality of community participation among the elderly and to determine their level of life satisfaction. It does so by shedding light first on the concept of community participation, its dimensions, and the conditions for its realization, and then by identifying the role of civil society organizations in promoting community participation in Algeria. Studying this issue, with its various forms of collective action, requires focusing on the social frameworks that support participants—particularly the elderly—and assessing their capacity to shape patterns of participation. This approach helps to identify the variables that define the activity of social forces in Algeria. Furthermore, the activation of community participation is closely linked to social structure and social awareness, which this article seeks to highlight. The paper also aims to define the concept of quality of life, its indicators, and its measurement tools.

Keywords---community participation, quality of life, elderly.

Introduction

The stage of old age is one of the most significant phases in a person's life course, following childhood, adolescence, youth, and adulthood. It represents the final stage of developmental growth and is considered the most sensitive and critical phase due to the physical changes that occur, including regression and decline resulting from the diminished efficiency of bodily systems in performing their functions as they once did. These physiological changes are often accompanied by various social and psychological transformations, during which the elderly need, more than ever before, to be recognized, appreciated, and provided with affection and emotional support.

How to Cite:

Rabah, S. (2025). Community participation and its role in the quality of life among the elderly. *The International Tax Journal*, 52(5), 3028–3040. Retrieved from <https://internationaltaxjournal.online/index.php/itj/article/view/303>

The International tax journal ISSN: 0097-7314 E-ISSN: 3066-2370 © 2025

ITJ is open access and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

Submitted: 01 May 2025 | Revised: 12 August 2025 | Accepted: 01 October 2025

3028

Undoubtedly, human well-being is not limited to fulfilling basic and essential survival needs; it extends to all aspects that enhance one's quality of life. This is fundamentally reflected in understanding and cultivating human strengths in order to guide individuals, groups, and societies toward a balanced and fulfilling life. Such a process emphasizes personal empowerment and subjective well-being. A widespread level of cultural, social, and political awareness among community members plays a crucial role—not only in the extent of participation but also in its quality and direction. The higher the level of awareness and the broader the scope of participation across various fields, the greater and more effective the community involvement becomes.

Community participation is, therefore, an essential requirement for all members and groups within society. Through it, individuals can identify their needs, fulfill their aspirations, address their problems, and contribute effectively to the development of their communities—yielding positive outcomes and a sense of satisfaction. The elderly, like other social groups, strive to participate in their communities and achieve self-fulfillment through different forms of social engagement, especially given the growing number of older adults worldwide. Hence, it is imperative to activate their participation in developmental projects and programs, invest in their diverse capacities, and recognize that the elderly are capable of meaningful contribution as a productive and vital force in society.

Accordingly, this study is guided by the following main research question: What is the role of community participation in enhancing the quality of life among the elderly?

This central question gives rise to several sub-questions:

- What is the current state of community participation among the elderly?
- What is the level of life satisfaction among the elderly, and how is it achieved?
- What are the conditions and dimensions of community participation for the elderly?
- How do civil society organizations contribute to promoting community participation in Algeria?
- What is the nature of quality of life, and what are its components, indicators, and measurement tools?

Section One: Community Participation

1. Concept and Definition

Linguistically:

The term participation (in Arabic: *mushāraka*) derives from the verb *shāraka*, meaning to take part in or contribute to an activity. Thus, “participation in work” refers to involvement or active contribution to production.

Terminologically:

Al-Ajmi defined it as “the activities carried out by members of the community to serve their society in various fields—political, social, cultural, or educational” (Al-Ajmi, 2007, p. 91).

The concept of community participation has become widely used in recent years in both developed and developing countries alike. Participation itself is not a new phenomenon; it did not suddenly emerge as a solution to complex problems. Rather, it has historical roots extending back decades, during which it underwent numerous developments. It is now regarded as one of the essential foundations for achieving and sustaining the desired development (Ahmed El-Rifai Bahgat & El-Sayed Mohamed Nas, 2006, p. 79).

In its general sense, participation is defined as “the involvement of the masses—or their representatives—in political, economic, and social life and in shaping the general objectives of the state and society.” In this sense, participation embodies the spirit of democracy. From a developmental perspective, community participation refers to “the involvement of targeted population groups in identifying and formulating the objectives of development plans aimed at

improving their conditions, as well as contributing to their implementation and evaluation” (Othman Ghoneim, 2005, p. 93).

To better understand the concept of community participation, it is important to clarify the broader notion of participation. The term has been used under several labels, such as mass participation, popular participation, or public participation. Despite the differences in terminology, they all converge on one essential meaning: the involvement of all individuals in the various activities and levels of political, economic, and social life. This form of participation is direct, as opposed to indirect participation through elected representatives or councils (Tag Eddine, 2012, p. 9).

According to Al-Ajmi (2005, p. 40), community participation refers to “the activities undertaken by members of the community to serve their society in all fields—political, social, cultural, and educational. These members may be individuals, groups, or institutions. Their behavior is characterized by voluntarism, commitment, awareness, integrity, and transparency rather than coercion or obligation. Such activities may be theoretical or practical, carried out directly or indirectly.”

Daabas (Yousri, 2009, p. 65) considered community participation to be “the voluntary efforts provided by various civil society organizations and community groups—through opinion, work, analysis, or contribution—to support development projects and programs in formal institutions. It aims to deepen the spirit of cooperation and collective performance and to mobilize local capacities to promote and sustain all developmental initiatives.”

The concept of community participation thus implies the involvement of all social groups and local leaders—either fully or partially—in different areas of development: economic, cultural, and political. Participation in social planning, in particular, refers to the involvement of citizens in the agencies responsible for preparing, implementing, and monitoring development plans at various levels. This should constitute active engagement, leading to what is known as bottom-up development, which seeks to reduce the dominant role of the state in development processes (Farid Subh Al-Qiq, 2015, Vol. 1, p. 132).

Community participation involves individuals and groups engaging in decisions that affect their lives within their communities. It is characterized by four essential features:

- Building collective knowledge among stakeholders.
- Collaborative action aimed at improving community well-being.
- Implementing co-creation as one of the fastest-growing forms of innovation.
- Enabling transformative change across value chains (Sabah Brahimi, 2021, pp. 294–295).

Community participation is generally divided into two main types:

- **Direct partnership:** This involves joint cooperation between community members and institutions in relation to national development processes. It takes several forms, including family consultations in public meetings and conferences, administrative decentralization in local planning institutions, and the use of media, surveys, research, and referenda on public issues.
- **Indirect partnership:** This type is carried out by individuals interested in specific topics or those delegated by certain institutions (Samar Al-Rahili & Areej Al-Sissi, 2019, p. 225).

Accordingly, community participation can be defined as the involvement of individuals within society in finding solutions to their problems whenever possible. This is achieved through the activation of participatory tools in planning, implementing, monitoring, and guiding various local development programs. It also entails providing opportunities for all community entities—individuals, families, public and private institutions, universities, and research laboratories—to participate actively and positively in this process to address challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Requirements and Conditions for Community Participation

1. Requirements of Community Participation

The essential requirements for community participation can be summarized as follows:

- Every individual within the community should feel a sense of belonging to that community, recognizing the existence of shared circumstances, problems, and mutual interests and relationships with others.
- Voluntary cooperation among individuals and groups within the local community aimed at achieving shared objectives and addressing fundamental needs.
- Local knowledge and experience that enable self-reliance.
- The presence of effective community institutions and organizations capable of mobilizing the energies of local community members and representing their goals and aspirations.
- Decentralized systems and democratic relations that encourage and support local initiatives within comprehensive community development programs at all stages (Zainab Samir Mohamed, 2017, p. 16).

According to Khater Ahmed Mostafa (1984, p. 68), community participation also rests upon a set of principles and requirements, summarized as follows:

1. Community participation should not be confined to the horizontal dimension—that is, among individuals of similar nature or status—but must also include the vertical dimension, involving interaction between citizens, institutions, and organizations across different administrative levels.
2. Decision-making and the determination of priorities in the process of community participation should not be monopolized by elites. Various public institutions and popular organizations must be involved to ensure that development serves the collective interest rather than specific groups.
3. Planning and development processes must reflect the needs and aspirations of local populations and target groups, ensuring that these processes are realistic and locally grounded. Imported development models should not be applied unless adapted to align with prevailing economic, social, political, and cultural contexts.

Further requirements for effective community participation include:

- Promoting a sense of responsibility and encouraging leadership to assume accountability.
- Effectively employing governmental and non-governmental efforts to meet public needs.
- Developing mechanisms to facilitate citizen participation through government and civil society institutions.
- Providing a qualified cadre of trained personnel equipped with the skills necessary to engage in community development processes (Abeer Abdelkader Mehna, 2014, p. 29).

2. Dimensions and Conditions for Effective Community Participation

2.1 Dimensions of Community Participation

Community participation comprises several dimensions, the most important of which are:

- Awareness of the issue or domain of participation.
- Participation that extends beyond mere execution to include planning and decision-making.
- Intrinsic motivation and willingness of individuals to participate without external pressure.
- The desire to bring about change in one's lifestyle or community context.

Community participation also reflects the capacity of active community members to understand the social context and strive to improve it through their collective efforts. This involves utilizing available human and material resources while continuously overcoming barriers that may hinder this process.

2.2 Conditions for Effective Social Participation

Achieving effective and impactful social participation requires fulfilling several conditions, including:

- A shared sense of **belonging and interdependence** among community members, along with recognition of common interests and challenges.
- Availability of **local knowledge and expertise** that foster self-reliance.
- **Voluntary cooperation** among individuals and community groups to achieve common objectives and meet basic needs.
- Existence of **efficient community organizations and institutions** capable of mobilizing local resources and representing the community's collective aspirations.
- Implementation of **decentralized systems** and **democratic relationships** that encourage and support local initiatives within comprehensive social development programs (Mouza Issa Al-Duwai & Alaa Zuhair Al-Rawashdeh, 2018, pp. 457–458).

3. The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Promoting Community Participation in Algeria

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a significant rise in the activities of **non-governmental organizations (NGOs)**, reflecting, to some extent, the failure of political parties to articulate transformative social agendas. Two primary theoretical approaches underpin the philosophy of **new social movements** as expressed through NGOs:

- **Model A:** Advocates for **practical involvement** in rebuilding developing societies by collaborating with governments to support the reconstruction of national economies. This approach encourages NGOs to assist states in implementing reforms suggested by major financial institutions, such as the IMF, and to promote solidarity initiatives such as the *Twizga* and *Solidarity Associations*.
- **Model B:** Calls for **critical and conscious engagement** in rebuilding developing societies by challenging institutionalized party systems, leading solidarity campaigns against the systematic exploitation of local resources by global financial powers.

Civil society in most Arab countries remains **fragile**, producing limited results in fostering effective cooperation between governmental and non-governmental sectors. Several factors hinder this collaboration, including the **dominance of the state over the economy** and the **restrictions imposed on NGOs**, which often fear their potential to mobilize public opinion, build social capital, and encourage civic accountability.

Nonetheless, civil society plays a vital role in promoting **social development**, serving as a mediator for modernization and change, a mechanism for organizing and representing citizens, and a platform for constructive participation in proposing viable solutions to local problems. It also functions as a **check on governmental power**, ensuring accountability and the protection of citizens' rights.

Development, by nature, is an **economic, cultural, and political process** that seeks continuous improvement of citizens' welfare through active, free, and meaningful participation in development efforts and equitable distribution of their benefits. International organizations affiliated with the United Nations have repeatedly emphasized the need to **enhance citizens' participation** alongside governments in achieving comprehensive development and equitable access to resources, thereby promoting social peace and economic growth.

Active citizen participation through **free, voluntary, and independent organizations** is crucial in the context of the shift from a **state-controlled economy** to a **free-market system**, within a framework of **partnership and complementarity** between civil society institutions, the government, and the private sector—the three essential pillars of the development process.

In Western countries, NGOs have become **permanent and influential partners** in shaping national policies and programs, benefiting from democratic environments, sound organizational structures, and financial independence. In contrast, NGOs in Arab countries often struggle with **limited funding**,

weak autonomy, and the absence of a genuine democratic climate due to inadequate institutional foundations.

In Algeria, the roles played by civil society organizations can be summarized as follows:

- Promoting and **practicing democracy** both at governmental and grassroots levels.
- **Expanding community participation** in governance and avoiding top-down decision-making that neglects citizens' real needs and problems.
- Addressing the **social consequences of economic reforms** and structural adjustment policies, such as unemployment, poverty, and social issues.
- **Engaging marginalized groups** and facilitating their integration into society.
- Encouraging citizens to become **central actors in sustainable development**.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of civil society—whether operating in a **charitable, developmental, or advocacy capacity**—depends on its internal independence, organizational competence, financial transparency, and accountability, as well as on the **political and social environment** in which it operates and the **public's belief** in the importance of democratic participation and respect for the rule of law (Fayrouz Zarrarqa, 2014, pp. 28–29).

Section Two: Quality of Life among the Elderly

1. The Concept of Quality of Life

Linguistic Meaning: According to *Ibn Manẓur* in *Lisan al-Arab*, the term “quality” (جودة) originates from the trilateral verb *jawada* (جَوَدَ). The adjective *good* (jayyid) is the opposite of *bad* (radi'), and its plural is *jīyaad* or *jīyaadaat* (a plural of plural). The expression *jaada bi-shay'in jawdatan wa-jawdah* means “it became good,” and *ajaada* refers to producing something excellent in speech or action (Ibn Manzur, 1993, p. 2015).

Terminological Meaning: Quality is a reflection of psychological level and life standards. The degree of progress and civilization achieved by humankind today undoubtedly reflects a certain level of quality of life.

Generally, *quality of life* refers to the quality of human characteristics in terms of physical, psychological, and cognitive constitution, as well as the degree of harmony with oneself and others, and one's social and moral formation (Ali Mahdi, Al-Yamadhli, Abdul Khaliq Najm, and Kazem, 2006, p. 69).

Various definitions of *quality of life* have emerged, encompassing closely related concepts such as *happiness*, *satisfaction*, *well-being*, and *self-contentment* (Sheikhi Mariam, 2003, p. 77).

According to **Mustafa Al-Sharqawi**, quality of life is:

“Everything that benefits an individual in developing his psychological and mental capacities independently, training to solve problems, using coping strategies for stressful situations, initiating help to others, and sacrificing for the welfare of society. This state is characterized by positive feelings, and quality of life is viewed through the individual's ability to satisfy psychological needs, maintain positive social relationships, achieve family and economic stability, job satisfaction, and resilience against social and economic pressures.”

(Mustafa Hassan Hussein, 2004, p. 15).

Similarly, **Abu Sree' Osama and Abeer Mohammed Anwar (2006, p. 206)** define quality of life as: “A subjective feeling of personal happiness and satisfaction with oneself and with the important aspects of one's life.” They emphasize that the *subjective evaluation* of one's happiness and life satisfaction is the essential basis for judging the quality of life.

2. Components of Quality of Life

Level	Personal Level	Societal Level
Subjective / Qualitative (Emotional Dimension)	How a person feels about himself or herself and his or her personal condition.	How a person feels about his or her society, and the perceived ability to participate in and influence community decisions.

Level	Personal Level	Societal Level
Objective Dimension	Functional aspects such as education and the nature of one's occupation.	Economic, social, and environmental conditions, as well as governmental efficiency.

Some researchers view quality of life as comprising three main dimensions, one of which is psychological quality of life as a key component of overall well-being:

- Subjective Aspect: Personal evaluation expressed through satisfaction and happiness.
- Objective Aspect: Functional assessment of life conditions.
- External Circumstances: Social stimuli and environmental factors. (Sheikhi Mariam, 2013/2014, p. 78)

3. Dimensions and Indicators of Quality of Life

3.1 Quality of Life Indicators

According to Saleh (1990), two types of quality of life indicators emerged over the past two decades:

- Objective Indicators: Advocated mainly by specialists, state agencies, researchers, and international development organizations. These include variables such as population, social status, employment, income and its distribution, transportation, housing, education, and health.
- Subjective Indicators: Concerned with individuals' perceptions and evaluations of their own life quality, the degree to which their needs are satisfied, and their feelings of happiness and satisfaction. Accordingly, people's happiness and life satisfaction—or conversely, their unhappiness and dissatisfaction—are considered the best indicators of life quality. (Saleh Nahed, 1990, pp. 65–68)

Fallowfield (1990) identified the following major indicators for measuring quality of life:

1. Psychological Indicators: Feelings of anxiety or depression, adjustment to illness, happiness, and general life satisfaction.
2. Social Indicators: The quality of personal relationships and engagement in social and recreational activities.
3. Occupational Indicators: Job satisfaction, commitment, performance capacity, and ability to adapt to job responsibilities.
4. Physical and Bodily Indicators: Satisfaction with health, ability to cope with pain, sleep quality, appetite, and sexual functioning.

Later, Schalock (2002) proposed three overarching categories of indicators, encompassing the most significant domains of individual life:

- Emotional Well-being: Satisfaction, self-concept, reduced stress.
- Interpersonal Relations: Interaction, relationships, social support.
- Material Well-being: Financial situation, employment, housing.
- Personal Development: Education, personal competence, and performance.
- Self-Determination: Autonomy, personal goals and values, choice-making.
- Physical Well-being: Health, daily life activities, leisure time.
- Social Inclusion (Participation): Social integration, connectedness, and community support.
- Rights: Human and legal rights, and due processes. (Hakim Bouamama, 2019, pp. 352–353)

3.2 Dimensions of Quality of Life

The concept of *quality of life* is relatively modern in academic research. Nevertheless, its use has expanded across all disciplines and fields of study. It is not confined to a single domain of life but rather extends to multiple areas such as health, psychology, society, economy, and environment. The term is

generally employed to describe either the level of material and social services provided to individuals or the extent to which these services satisfy their personal needs.

According to **Rosen**, quality of life encompasses **four fundamental dimensions** identified in his measurement scale: **perceived psychological stress, emotional state, psychological loneliness, and life satisfaction**.

Similarly, **Mohammad Hamid Al-Hindawi (2010, pp. 39–40)** noted a general consensus on the existence of **four principal dimensions of quality of life**:

- **Physical Dimension:** Related to illnesses and associated symptoms.
- **Social Dimension:** Concerned with social contact and interaction with others.
- **Functional Dimension:** Pertaining to medical care and the level of physical activity.
- **Psychological Dimension:** Related to cognitive functioning, emotional state, general health perception, mental health, life satisfaction, and happiness.

Furthermore, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** views the global concept of quality of life as consisting of several dimensions, including **psychological state, emotional condition or satisfaction with work and life, religious beliefs, family interactions, education, and income level**.

Overall, quality of life is formed through the **individual's subjective perception** of his or her **mental state, physical health, functional abilities, and understanding of existing illnesses**. (*Jibril, Imad Mohammad, 2007, p. 30*)

3.3 Tools for Measuring Quality of Life

According to **Wiklund (2000)**, tools for measuring quality of life can be classified into **three main types**: *global, general, and disease-specific* measures.

First: Global Measurement This approach is designed to assess overall quality of life in a comprehensive and integrated manner. It often relies on a **single question** that asks individuals to evaluate their general quality of life. For example, the **Flanagan Quality of Life Scale** asks respondents to express their satisfaction across **15 domains of life**.

Second: General Measurement This type shares certain characteristics with the global measure but was specifically developed for **functional tasks in healthcare settings**. It provides a broad evaluation of the **potential impact of illness or its symptoms** on patients' daily lives. This general measure can be applied to **large population groups**, and its main advantage lies in its **comprehensive coverage** and its ability to **compare different patient groups**.

However, its **limitation** is that it does not address **disease-specific concerns** relevant to particular medical conditions.

Third: Disease-Specific Measurement This tool was developed to monitor **patient responses to treatment** in specific medical conditions. It focuses on **issues that are sensitive to change** and helps to capture subtle variations in patients' perceptions. Nevertheless, it is limited by the fact that many patients have **difficulty conceptualizing or relating to the broader definition of quality of life**.

(*Saleh Ismail Abdullah Al-Homs, 2010, p. 51*)

Chapter Three: Quality of Life among the Elderly, Ways to Achieve Satisfaction, and Its Relationship with Social Participation

3.1 Quality of Life among the Elderly and Ways to Achieve Satisfaction

Aging is not merely a biological process characterized by physical and physiological changes in older adults; rather, it is also a social and psychological phenomenon. In this stage of life, the elderly face numerous health, social, and emotional challenges that require adaptation and resilience in order to maintain satisfaction with life, which in turn supports psychological and physical well-being.

Since the late 1980s, concepts such as “normal aging”—which refers to aging without disease or disability but with a gradual decline in functional abilities—have been distinguished from “pathological aging,” which involves illness and/or disability.

In recent years, gerontology has increasingly focused on the concept of “successful aging,” which encompasses several dimensions that collectively form positive quality of life. These include physical health, continued social activity, and life satisfaction, which are key factors in achieving psychological and social adjustment among older adults.

The World Health Organization (WHO) introduced the concept of active aging to refer to the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. Likewise, healthy aging has been defined as the process of improving physical, mental, and social well-being to allow older people to remain socially active, independent, and to enjoy a good quality of life.

The concept of successful aging involves three major components:

1. Good physical health,
2. Maintenance of cognitive and behavioral skills, and
3. Continued engagement in social and productive activities.

Life satisfaction constitutes another important indicator of successful aging. These dimensions are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, enhancing overall quality of life.

According to Ushikubo (1998), maintaining good health in old age requires adopting healthy habits throughout life and developing adaptive strategies to cope with age-related diseases, as well as adherence to medical advice to restore balance. Similarly, Dube (2003) suggested that successful aging encompasses subjective indicators such as well-being, happiness, and continuous personal growth.

Research also shows a significant relationship between goal achievement and subjective well-being, both of which contribute to good aging. Based on this idea, Dube and colleagues (2005) in Canada developed a method known as Personal Goal Management, designed to help retirees transition effectively into later life and experience successful aging. This method relies on various principles that strengthen personal goals and well-being across different life stages by encouraging goal selection, motivation activation, energy focus, and self-regulation of behavior. It also emphasizes effective personality utilization, including goal planning, resource identification, stage definition, anticipation of obstacles, coping strategies, and seeking support when necessary.

Pursuing such goals reduces passivity and fosters personal development. Goal monitoring, in turn, becomes a source of subjective well-being, requiring flexibility and effective management of both internal and external resources. Goals should align with basic psychological needs, which ultimately promotes satisfaction and positive emotions. All these processes contribute to self-fulfillment and quality of life among retirees.

Furthermore, participation in productive and socially reciprocal activities is an essential factor in successful aging. Maintaining social relationships plays a crucial role in shaping older adults’ perceptions of their quality of life. According to Farquhar (1995), relationships—especially those with parents and family—are as important as physical health in determining life quality, highlighting the social dimension of the concept.

Maintaining family and friendship ties helps older adults—particularly those in elderly care centers—reduce feelings of loneliness. Social support also helps them maintain emotional balance and overall well-being. Such engagement allows older adults to exercise meaningful roles and preserve social connections. Similarly, involvement in social networks and charitable activities enhances productivity among retirees, extends longevity, and supports better health outcomes (Samia Chinar Boutaani Farid & Ayah Boulhal, 2021, pp. 169–170)

The concept of life satisfaction is among the fundamental notions that have received significant attention from researchers in psychology and mental health. It is considered a key indicator of

adaptation and sound mental health. According to Al-Seif, satisfaction represents the degree to which an individual's needs are fulfilled, which depends on multiple factors, including:

- Social factors, such as maintaining positive relationships between the elderly person and their environment.
- Material factors, such as monthly income and educational level.

These factors contribute to helping older adults feel content with their life goals, achieve aspirations, and fulfill personal desires.

Several related concepts are linked to life satisfaction, including:

- a. **Happiness:** According to Tatarkayoks, happiness requires overall satisfaction—that is, contentment with life as a whole.
- b. **Religiosity:** Religiosity represents one of the most fulfilling human needs, fostering life satisfaction and happiness. Throughout history, many individuals have practiced forms of religiosity that constituted part of their identity. Religion serves as a positive psychological factor, helping individuals define goals and avoid wasting energy on random activities.
- c. **Acceptance of Life:** This broad concept refers to the elderly person's ability to adapt and harmonize with themselves and with others in their surroundings.
- d. **Quality of Life:** According to Dalkey and Rook, quality of life is defined as the individual's perception of their living conditions, which determines their sense of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, as well as happiness or distress. (Asael Dawood Mahmoud Hawashin & Huda Mahmoud Hassan Hijazi, 2022, p. 54)

2.1 Motivations and Forms of Social Participation among the Elderly

There are several motivations that drive individuals to participate in community activities. According to **Al-Seif (1999, p. 152)**, these motivations include:

a. Personal motives: Aimed at satisfying psychological and social needs such as:

- The need for appreciation,
- The need for belonging,
- The need for self-actualization, and
- The need for status and social position.

b. The desire to work with others.

c. The formation of diverse social relationships.

d. Working for the public good.

e. Financial gain.

f. The desire to earn the respect and appreciation of fellow citizens.

As for the **forms of community participation**, they are diverse and include several types. According to **Abdullah, Mohamed Abdel Fattah (2007, p. 65)**:

1. **Representation in local authorities:** Participation through representation in local governing bodies is considered one of the most important means for citizens to organize and engage in community development, as it is based on clear democratic principles.
2. **Membership in community development organizations:** This represents an indirect form of participation, encompassing all stages of the development process within their areas of responsibility. Such organizations are particularly common in rural areas and include entities such as agricultural cooperatives and community development associations.

Participation of older adults in community life is regarded as **a vital necessity**, given that they represent an essential segment of society, no less important than others. Moreover, community development programs and projects ultimately **benefit the elderly themselves** by addressing their needs, solving their problems, and helping them achieve self-fulfillment.

The importance of participation lies in encouraging the elderly to remain **active and engaged** in suitable activities. According to **Al-Ahmad, Wasim Hossam (2016, p. 46)**, continued involvement helps maintain vitality and purpose. To enable the elderly to participate effectively, **their integration into society is essential**, allowing them to **share their knowledge and experiences with younger generations**. It is equally important to **empower them and create opportunities for volunteering and community service** (**Al-Zubaidi, Ali Jassim Okla, 2009, p. 61**).

From this perspective, **social work practice with the elderly** emphasizes the importance of dedicated efforts to support this age group—especially given that it is expected to become one of the fastest-growing segments of the population in the near future. Therefore, **social workers aim to enhance the elderly's social functioning** and maximize their capacity for active community engagement (**Anani, Fadia Ahmed et al., 2014, p. 160**).

Conclusion

The increasing number of elderly individuals and the specific challenges associated with this demographic growth have compelled scholars and researchers to conduct extensive studies addressing the conditions of older adults. These studies emphasize the importance of understanding the unique nature of this stage of life.

The present study sought to highlight the **role of social participation in enhancing the quality of life among the elderly**, given that social participation represents a vital factor in their well-being. It contributes significantly to maintaining both physical health and psychological tranquility, thereby achieving a higher level of quality of life, even in the face of stressful events and difficult social circumstances.

To achieve these objectives, the following recommendations are proposed:

- **Provide adequate material, psychological, and social conditions** to enhance the quality of life among older adults.
- **Increase the effectiveness of social participation** for the elderly through the support and involvement of family and friends, enabling them to lead more active and meaningful lives.
- **Enhance psychosocial services** offered to the elderly, recognizing their crucial and influential role within society.
- **Improve the overall social services** available to older adults and ensure comprehensive care across all dimensions of their well-being.
- **Promote religious, health, and psychological awareness** regarding issues of aging through various media platforms.
- **Ensure that older adults are informed about available services** aimed at improving their quality of life, thereby enhancing their ability to manage psychological challenges and mitigate their effects.
- **Encourage the participation of elderly individuals in various activities** to reduce the burdens associated with aging, alleviate its multidimensional impacts, and foster self-esteem and stronger social relationships.
- **Prevent feelings of emptiness and loneliness** among older adults by showing care, appreciation, and recognition of their status within the family.
- **Educate younger generations about the challenges and needs of old age**, encouraging them to provide appropriate care and understanding to elderly family members.

References

- Al-Ajmi, (2007). *Community Participation and Self-Management of Schools*. Egyptian Library, Egypt.
- Bahgat, A. R., & Nas, S. M. (2006). *Studies in Education Financing and Human Development*. Nahda Library, Egypt.
- Ghoneim, O. (2005). *Introduction to Regional Development Planning* (2nd ed.). Safa Publishing and Distribution, Amman.
- Taj El-Din, (2012). *Youth and Political Participation*. Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo.
- Al-Ajmi, (2005). *Community Participation Required to Activate the Self-Management Approach in Primary Schools in Dakahlia Governorate*. *Journal of the Faculty of Education, Mansoura University*, 58(1), 3–90.
- Daabes, Y. (2009). *Community Participation and Sustainable Development*. Baytash Center for Publishing and Distribution, Cairo.
- Al-Qeeq, F. S. (2015). *The Role of Community Participation in Achieving Sustainable Development: Strategic Development Plans for Palestinian Cities as a Case Study*. *University of Palestine Journal for Research and Studies*, 8(1), January.
- Brahimi, S., & Saai, H. (2021). *Community Participation of Volunteer Youth in Enhancing Social Security: A Field Study on a Sample of Volunteering Students from the University of Batna 1*. *Global Politics Journal*, 5(2), 291–308.
- Al-Ruheili, S., & Al-Sissi, A. (2019). *Mechanisms for Activating the Partnership between Family and School in Light of Saudi Vision 2030*. *Journal of Psychological and Educational Sciences*, 5(3), 221–246.
- Mohammed, Z. S. (2017). *Activating Community Partnership among Department Heads in Jordanian Private Universities from the Perspective of Faculty Members* (Master's thesis). Middle East University, Amman, Jordan.
- Khater, A. M. (1984). *The Path of Community Organization*. University Press.
- Mahna, A. A. (2014/1435). *A Proposed Framework for Activating Community Participation in UNRWA Schools in Gaza Governorates in Light of Contemporary Global Trends* (Master's thesis). Islamic University of Gaza, Palestine.
- Al-Duwai, M. A., & Al-Rawashdeh, A. Z. (2018, January). *Social Participation and Sustainable Development in Developing Countries: A Sociological Analysis of Obstacles and Mechanisms of Confrontation*. *Journal of Legal Studies*, University of Médéa, 4(1).
- Zarrarqa, F. (2014). *The Role of Civil Society in Activating Community Participation*. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 18, University of Sétif 2.
- Ibn Manzur. (1993). *Lisan Al-Arab*. Dar Al-Ma'arif, Egypt.
- Ali, M., Al-Yamadli, A. K., & Najm, K. (2006). *Quality of Life among Omani and Libyan University Students*. *Scientific Journal of the Arab Open Academy in Denmark*.
- Cheikhi, M. (2003). *The Nature of Work and Its Relationship with Quality of Life: A Field Study under Certain Variables* (Master's thesis). University of Tlemcen, Algeria.
- Hussein, M. H. (2004). *Some Psychological Variables of Quality of Life and Their Relation to Personality Traits among Heroin Addicts* (Unpublished Master's thesis). Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University.
- Abu Sarea, O., Anwar, A. M., & Morsi, S. I. (2006). *The Impact of Life Skills Development on Enhancing Quality of Life among General Education Students in Cairo*. Proceedings of the Symposium on Psychology and Quality of Life, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman, December 17–19.
- Cheikhi, M. (2013/2014). *The Nature of Work and Its Relationship with Quality of Life: A Field Study under Certain Variables* (Master's thesis). Aboubakr Belkaid University, Tlemcen, Algeria.
- Saleh, N. (1990). *Quality of Life Indicators: A General Overview of the Concept and Approach*. *National Social Journal*, 27.
- Bouamama, H. (2019). *Quality of Life: Concept and Dimensions (An Analytical Study)*. *Journal of Psychological and Educational Sciences*, 8(1), 343–360.
- Al-Hindawi, M. H. (2010). *Social Support and Its Relationship with the Level of Satisfaction with Quality of Life among Physically Disabled Persons in Gaza Governorates* (Master's thesis). Al-Azhar University, Gaza.

- Jibril, I. M. (2007). *Quality of Life and Some Personal Variables among Two Categories of Chronic Pain Compared to Healthy Individuals* (Master's thesis). Department of Psychology, University of Menoufia.
- Al-Homs, S. I. A. (2010). *Birth Anxiety among Mothers in the Southern Governorates of Gaza and Its Relation to Quality of Life* (Master's thesis). Islamic University, Gaza.
- Boutaâni, S. S., & Boulhbal, A. (2021). *Applications of Quality of Life in Elderly Care Centers*. *Sociologia Journal*, 5(1), 155–174.
- Hawashin, A. D. M., & Hejazi, H. M. H. (2022). *Community Participation and Its Relationship with Life Satisfaction among the Elderly: A Field Study in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*. *Jordanian Journal of Social Sciences*, 15(1).
- Al-Saif, A. M. F. (1999). *Old Age and Social Adjustment: A Field Study Applied to Retirees in Riyadh*. Center for Humanities Research, King Saud University, Riyadh.
- Abdullah, M. A. (2007). *Practicing Developmental Social Work in Local Communities*. Modern University Office, Egypt.
- Al-Ahmad, W. H. (2016). *Protection of the Rights of the Elderly*. 1st ed., Law and Economics Library, Riyadh.
- Al-Zubaidi, A. J. A. (2009). *Psychology of Aging: The Post-Developmental Stages in Human Life*. Ithraa for Publishing and Distribution, 1st ed., Jordan.
- Anani, F. A., et al. (2014). *Diseases of Aging and the Psychological and Social Problems of the Elderly*. 1st ed., Al-Fahd National Library.