

The Study of Social Relations Between Aged and Other Family Members

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Abstract: This study has been done to investigate the conditions of social relationships between aged and other family members. Main theory behind study: Parsons's social actions theory pattern-variables are used in this study. Three hundred and fifty people were chosen randomly who are living in west north of Iran. Data collection is done through 18 months through participant observation. Bill's main scale categories are used for more explanation. The finding shows that the status of aged has been decreased and they aren't paid any attention by other people. But this won't continue for a long time and it will changed. If other members have a positive view toward them and think that they are able and can do everything. The condition of social relations between aged and other family members are as follows: the old people show affection in 84% while children show only 35% of affection. The behavior of children toward the aged is according to not accepting them to be involved in their activities particularistic standards while the aged act toward children according to the rule of universality. In more than 65%, children behave towards the aged according to (performance) while the old people behave toward in 78% according to being (quality). The children often act toward the aged in 61% according to the (ascription) while the aged act toward them in 75% according to the (specific and achievement). The rest of family members in 88% act towards the aged on the basis of (self-orientations) but the aged act toward them in 53% on the basis of (collectively-orientation).

Key words: Social relationship, aged, pattern variables, social status

INTRODUCTION

With increasing Social change in recently century, the population trends have increased the aged in world and especially in western countries (Jorgensen, 1980; Zopf, 1986). During the past 30 years and primarily in Western Europe and the United States, studies of intergenerational family relationships have increased within gerontology and family sociology (Hammarstrom, 2004). A major reason for this interest in family relations across generations may be the growing demands on families. Brought about by the changing age structure of the population, together with constraints on public expenditure with regard to financial transfer payments for health care for the aged (Bumpass, 1990). According with disengagement theory that exhibit from Cumming (1961) The more people become older, the less they use their contacts around the social environment. This condition also is a negative evaluation about aged even make a theoretical approach such as ageism that a system of negative evaluations of people based upon their age (Calhoun, 1989).

We know that being aged often means losing interaction and relations with other people (Giddens, 1989)

and the strong social status of aged has been lost in today's world (Riley, 1987). For example aged people travel less than youths (Matthews, 1979) or Most old women become depressed, shocked and feeling that they are to be blamed become of their husband's deaths (Riley and Waring, 1976). As well as the people has various stereotype about aged but wrong stereotype about aged are frequently as in other fields (Atchley, 1985). Over population some 38% live fully independent lives (Angier, 1995) and more than 50% old people in iran, don't go to doctor because of financial problems (Salmand, 2003).

Several studies on intergenerational family relationships have relied on the construct of solidarity, elaborated by Vern Bengtson and colleagues (Bengtson and Schrader, 1982) and focused on later life families and relations between old parents, their adult children and grandchildren. Examples of such studies in recent years are Daatland and Herlofson (2003), Katz *et al.* (1951), Parrot and Bengtson (1999) and Silverstein *et al.* (1998) just to mention a few. Other studies focused on needs assessment about aged for example: according to American investigation, the aged men and women (those 58 and over) have expressed unhappiness and insufficient

medical care as one of their main problems (Kart, 1985). More than 50% of old people don't go to a Doctor Because of financial problems (Mehr, press).

The purpose of this study is to make a construct of interaction between family members, to discuss the relevance of some of its basic theoretical assumptions, thereby contributing to a theoretical discussion of this construct. Although the most recent years have witnessed an intense discussion on various theoretical stances and schools within social gerontology (The Gerontologist 1996, No. 6 and Journal of Gerontology 1997, No. 2), there has been no mention of the relevance of the basic theoretical assumptions underlying central concepts. The discussion carried on hitherto on the construct of social relationship between aged and other family members has primarily dealt with two issues. The basic issue has concerned the extent to which the construct of social relationship can be seen as a single higher-order construct of various interacted dimensions.

After Luescher and Pillemer (1998) attempted to establish ambivalence as a theoretically and empirically more useful concept with which to approach the study of later life family relations, as compared with the concepts of solidarity and conflict, Bengtson *et al.* (2002) recently discussed ambivalence in relation to solidarity. The discussion in this article is primarily aimed the theoretical point of departure in parsons's concept of social action and pattern-variable and the presumed analogy relation between aged and children and as well the assumed connections between the dimensions of the construct. As the pattern variable construct is elaborated with respect to relations between family relations, the focus of the discussion is on aged relationships micro social level, that is, specific family relations, not relations between cohort-based generation aggregates at the macro structural level.

Recently in Iran 6.6% of total population is aged so study about aged problems and social relationship in east world such as middle east countries is very important too.

The pattern-variable constitute a set of 5 dichotomies which may be used to categorize actors' modes of orientation in the personality system, normative requirements in the social system and the value-patterns of the cultural system (Hamilton, 1989). An actor in any situation is confronted by a series of major dilemmas of orientation, a series of choices that must make before the situation has a determinate meaning for him'. Parsons begins to suggest some of the dichotomous concepts which crystallize later as the pattern-variables, as a means of classifying modes of orientation of action system.

The pattern-variables, as defined in social system, are as follows (Parsons, 1982).

Affectivity vs. affective neutrality: This covers the emotion or lack of it which is appropriate to a given situation-we would expect a parent's interactions with his child to be highly affective, whilst the doctor-patient relationship is more likely to be characterized by affective neutrality.

Diffuseness vs. specificity: This concerns the range or scope of obligation in an interaction situation: Should they be broad ranging-for example the parent's concern with all aspects of his child's life-or confined to a specific context, for instance the dentist's concern with the teeth rather than any other aspect of his patients' lives.

Universalism vs. particularism: This dilemma is generated by interactions where the types of evaluative standards to be applied are either general and consensual criteria or ones quite unique to particular actors. For example, the parent may apply universalistic standards of intelligence when interacting with children not known to him, but particularistic standard when dealing with his own child.

Achievement vs. ascription: The dichotomy utilized here covers the dilemma posed by whether to assess alter in term of general performance criteria (e.g., educational qualifications, business 'success' etc.) or in terms of qualities that are ascribed on the basis of heredity or other forms of endowment (e.g. age, sex, race, casts, etc.) which lack a performance standard.

Self-collectivity vs: Originally described as the private vs. collective interest dilemma, this dichotomy covers orientations of action either to individual interests or to group interests and goals. For example, should the actor on a sinking ship save himself or seek. To ensure that others are helped to safety?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Total number of old people that chosen for this study is 350 people were chosen random method sampling who are living in west north of Iran. This group involved old men, old women and their family member or children's. Data collection is done through 18 months through participant and non participant observation by three observers. Bill's main scale categories are used for more explanation. So the compare results of two set of observation (according to pattern-variable and bill's categories) show the high validity of this study.

We started by using a widely quoted review on gerontology and social relationship in two ways: we evaluated the articles that were included in that review and we used the Science Citation Index to identify studies that cited that review. Next, we searched the database using the search term aged combined with social relationship social status, or family relationship, limited to studies in humans. Titles and abstracts of both search strategies were independently examined for eligibility by three of us. In case of doubt, the full article was retrieved and eligibility was discussed. Both original articles and reviews were retrieved. This whole process was repeated for references from identified studies and reviews Criteria and data collection.

Studies were eligible for inclusion if they satisfied the following three criteria: Case-control or cohort study in humans, exposure defined as use of social relationship and cases defined as social relationship, aged people, or family and children. Data were extracted from each observer by three reviewers using preprinted forms. We recorded study design, characteristics of observation, definitions of cases and aged who observed, prevalent or incident case ascertainment, total number of cases in the all areas the measure of association (odds ratio, relative risk, or hazard ratio), the magnitude of the association with its corresponding 95% confidence interval and the variables adjusted for in the analysis. When separate results were reported within one study for both old men and old women, the results for social relationship were recorded. When varying type of social relationship use was reported, we took the results for the largest group.

Statistical analysis: Results of cohort studies were typically expressed as relative type of aged act and children's social act as social relationship. We used frequencies table and description statistics for describe each variable and spearman correlation coefficient test for variables association. A hazard ratio is the ratio of instantaneous probability of the outcome event (type of act according pattern-variables) in the family members (aged, children or other) compared with that in the aged and other members and can be considered a relative risk. For simplicity, we refer to relative risk for all types of measures of association. The correlate of the relative risk with its corresponding standard error, taken directly from the studies or calculated from the reported 95% confidence interval, provided the data points for the analysis. We did not exclude outliers simply on the basis of the statistical test. Studies where cognition was the main outcome of interest among users and nonusers of social relationship were classified as studies with cognitive decline cases.

RESULTS

The social status of old woman has been decreased more than old men. Nobody pays any attention to them and they are considered as useless people. The children not accept their opinion and their participant about family future, economic and family management, general policy in family and other aspects of problems. The old woman are only as baby sitters and play with her grand children and takes care of them only. They are often isolated from other and try to be rest and eat aside. The old women only start telling with their own friends.

One of other kind of aged isolation from social relationship is aside live. In this kind of life, old women has separate home and lived aside. This kind of life for them is very dangerous. Because they have need to help them to cooking, bathing and all other aspects of their life. At least 17% of old women have such as life. The social status of old men is better than old women. Especially they are more independent and everybody uses their opinions, If they pensioner. The children accepted and participate their opinion about family problems. On other hand old men are acceptability more than old women within children. Only about 2% of old men live apart from their families.

One of the main reasons that old people have a lower status and isolated from social relationship network, is the economical viewpoint of children. This is a fact that other members of the family think that the old people are as barriers for them and the old people avoid their progress in the life. Only 43% of people have strong agreed that old people are as barriers and 14% have agreed it and 17% haven't given their ideas about it. 21% of people not agree with this idea and only 5% very strongly not agree with this idea. There is a Positive correlation (Spearman's Rho) of about 7% with taking into account the economical view point of children. In this study 16% of children have very strong economical approaches and 62% had strong and 14% were average. Only 7% had weak approaches and only 1% had very weak economical view points. Approaching toward emotionless about aged people among the children related to extreme financial viewpoints as shown in Fig. 1. When they have positive financial viewpoints about the aged people, they change their attitude and become more emotional. The more the children get extreme financial view about the aged people. The more they become emotionless so that their basis needs like batting and food aren't taken into account. The relation of economical approaches become Weaker. This relation has being within self or collectivity orientation behaviors but this relation will be decrease into particularistic and universalistic behaviors.

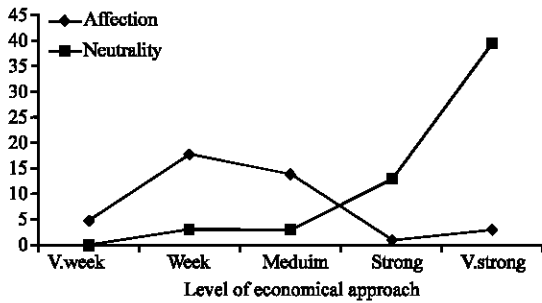


Fig. 1: The relation between economical approach and type of children act toward aged

CONCLUSION

The research shows that the old people have many problems with their children. The old people aren't paid any attention and their behavior changes with their children. They are isolated from the family relationships. The path of these changes is negative about aged. So, they are not obviating. There is significant difference between old men and women conditions. The social status of old men is much better than old women. Not meeting the main needs of old people com is as follows according to pattern-variables of parson theory:

- Although, the old people act emotionally, they receive no emotion at all.
- On the whole, other members have no positive among the aged and are considers as old, useless and incapable people.
- Since social relations with aged have not manifest and positive result such as economic benefit for children, so they have negative view and attitude especially economically and no one likes to create any relations with them, but aged have their normal positive and view for them and attention toward according (being) without view about the future result of acts.
- Aged behavior with their own children as their own children but children consider them as old useless people and not attention that aged is their mother or fathers.
- Most of the behaviors of children towards aged are according to self-orientation but more than half of the behavior of aged toward the children are (collectively-orientation).

There are two main variables which have special effects for their being useless and be come isolated from social relationship in family:

- Economical views among family members.
- The thought that aged are unable and useless persons, who prevent other member's progress.

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