

## ORAL PAPER PRESENTATION 7: OTHERS

### Volunteering characteristics, social support, and successful aging: Mediation effects of volunteer satisfaction and gender differences

S. W. Lee, J. H. Lee

**Purpose** One of the representative social activities that affects successful aging is volunteer work. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of volunteer activity characteristics and social support on successful aging and the mediating effects of volunteer satisfaction and gender differences, along with the relationships among these variables. The characteristics of volunteer activities consists of the number of monthly hours and the level of motivation to participate. Existing studies (Kim & Choi, 2012; Lee, 2009) found that the frequency of volunteering and the motivation to participate influenced the volunteer satisfaction of older adults. Hwang (2010) revealed that volunteer satisfaction was positively associated with successful aging. Social support has also been found to be positively related to both volunteer satisfaction (Moon, 2015) and successful aging (Gyasi & Phillips, 2020). Based on these findings, volunteer satisfaction is expected to play a mediating role in the relationship between volunteering characteristics and successful aging. Meanwhile, elderly males and females with different life courses may have a gap in terms of volunteering and social support. These gender differences can have a significant effect on successful aging. Furthermore, volunteer satisfaction can differ depending on social network size and the degree of social support, which in turn directly or indirectly affect successful aging. Another purpose of this study is to help make policies and practical recommendations to improve volunteer satisfaction through technology (smart phones, Internet, ICT) for both males and females. **Method** A self-administered survey was given to elderly people aged 60 and older living in Gwangju and Jeolla Province, South Korea. 542 participants that are currently volunteering or regularly participated in volunteer work for more than 6 months were included in this study. The SPSS 25.0 program for data analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation, and hierarchical linear regression was used to analyze the effects on the main variables of successful aging. Apart from regression analysis, structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to test the mediating effects of volunteer satisfaction and gender differences on the mediating model. **Results and Discussion** The results obtained in this study showed that the mean score for successful aging was 3.87 (range: 1~5), and that the successful aging score of males (3.92) was significantly higher than that of females (3.82). Males (3.54, range 1~5) had a significantly higher volunteer motivation than females (3.40). The mean scores for the size of the social network (3.11, range 1~5), social support (3.66, range 1~5), volunteer satisfaction (4.06, range 1~5) showed no gender differences. In this study, purposive motivation, the size of friend/neighbor networks and family support can be used to predict the successful aging of males and females. When examining mediating effects, volunteer satisfaction was found to have a full mediation effect on the relationship between the motivation to participate in volunteering and successful aging for both males and females. On the other hand, volunteer satisfaction was found to have a partial mediation effect on the relationship between social support from family and friends/neighbors and successful aging for both males and females. In terms of gender differences, volunteer satisfaction only had a partial mediation effect on the male group when the size of the social network affected successful aging. Meanwhile, the size of family/relative networks had a positive effect on the successful aging of women. Based on the research results, it is necessary to provide online volunteer programs that incorporates both education and counseling. Since there has been an increase in the number of chatbot services used in caring for the elderly, a method to expand the volunteering areas for managing chatbot services is also needed. Mobile phone education should also be provided to help senior volunteers understand how to operate and manage this service. It is also recommended that video programs be created to enable elderly men to build mutual relationships with a diverse group of friends and neighbors in the community as well as their family during COVID-19 era. In addition, online programs that regularly organize family gathering should be provided so that women can interact with family members. Finally, there is a need for measures to increase access to programs where women can participate in community service through internet-based technology.

#### References

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**Keywords:** volunteering of older adults, social support, volunteer satisfaction, successful aging, gender differences

**Address:** College of Human Ecology, Chonnam National University, Gwangju, South Korea

**Email:** [stylefive1@naver.com](mailto:stylefive1@naver.com); [jhlee2@jnu.ac.kr](mailto:jhlee2@jnu.ac.kr)