

# Frustrated Interpersonal Needs and Life Satisfaction in the Elderly Living Alone

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## Objective

This study aims to investigate differences between the elderly living alone and those living with others in frustrated interpersonal needs and life satisfaction. Also, we explore the effects of frustrated interpersonal needs on life satisfaction in the elderly living alone.

## Method

The participants include 572 elderly people aged over 60 in Busan, Korea. Life satisfaction were evaluated by the Life Satisfaction Self-Rating Scale (LSRS) and frustrated interpersonal needs were measured by the Interpersonal Needs Questionnaire-Revised (INQ-R).

## Result

The overall LSRS scores were significantly lower in the elderly living alone ( $106.2 \pm 20.1$ ) than living with others ( $115.3 \pm 13.9$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The total INQ-R score was significantly lower in the elderly living alone ( $73.8 \pm 12.1$ ) than those living with others ( $76.9 \pm 12.0$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). As a result of multiple regression analysis, we came to know that frustrated interpersonal needs were factors affecting life satisfaction in living alone group.

Table 1. General characteristics of participants

Characteristics	Total (n=572)		Living with others (n=488)		Living alone (n=84)		$\chi^2$	p-value
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
<b>Sex</b>							3.255	0.071
Male	256	44.8	226	46.3	30	35.7		
Female	316	55.2	262	53.7	54	64.3		
<b>Education</b>							28.92	<0.001
Less than middle school graduate	289	50.5	224	45.9	65	77.4		
High school graduate	247	43.2	229	46.9	18	21.4		
More than college graduate	36	6.3	35	7.2	1	1.2		
<b>Religion</b>							1.511	0.219
Yes	260	45.5	227	46.5	33	39.3		
No	312	54.5	261	53.5	51	60.7		
<b>Occupation</b>							27.65	<0.001
Yes	274	47.9	256	52.5	18	21.4		
No	298	52.1	232	47.5	66	78.6		
<b>Income (1,000 won)</b>							139.3	<0.001
<2,000	210	36.7	131	26.8	79	94.0		
2,000-4,000	275	48.1	271	55.5	4	4.8		
4,000-6,000	84	14.7	83	17.0	1	1.2		
≥6,000	3	0.5	3	0.6	0	0.0		
<b>Age (mean±SD), years*</b>	65.3	4.4	64.8	4.0	68.0	5.5	-5.102	<0.001

\* : 5.102, SD : standard deviation

Table 2. Difference between life satisfaction and frustrated interpersonal needs in the elderly living with others or those living alone

	Living with others (n=488)		Living alone (n=84)		t	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
<b>Life satisfaction</b>						
Food, clothing, and shelter	18.1	2.3	16.6	3.6	3.543	0.001
Friendship	14.1	2.3	13.0	3.1	3.071	0.003
Family and relatives	10.5	1.7	9.9	2.1	2.848	0.005
Physical and mental health	17.4	2.4	16.5	2.9	2.821	0.005
Job	7.0	1.2	6.2	1.4	4.920	<0.001
Economy	6.6	1.4	5.6	1.8	4.532	<0.001
Human relationship	6.9	1.3	6.3	1.4	3.711	<0.001
Social activities and leisure activities	13.8	2.2	12.9	2.8	2.831	0.006
Happiness	10.3	1.7	9.3	2.1	4.559	<0.001
Autonomy and self-esteem	10.3	1.6	9.5	1.9	4.399	<0.001
<b>Total</b>	115.3	13.9	106.2	20.1	3.992	<0.001
<b>Frustrated interpersonal needs</b>						
Perceived burdensomeness	34.0	6.2	32.5	6.0	2.033	0.043
Low belongingness	42.8	7.2	41.1	7.3	1.973	0.049
<b>Total</b>	76.9	12.0	73.8	12.1	2.235	0.026

SD : standard deviation

Table 3. Factors affecting life satisfaction of the elderly living alone

Variables	B	S.E	$\beta$	p-value
Perceived burdensomeness	0.796	0.096	0.324	<0.001
Low belongingness	1.150	0.072	0.548	<0.001

Adjusted for Age, Sex, Religion, Occupation, Educational level, Monthly income

## Conclusion

The results of present study suggest that the elderly living alone are more likely to have poor life satisfaction and frustrated interpersonal needs. Also, frustrated interpersonal needs are related to life satisfaction. Thus, it is necessary to establish the social support system such as social isolation prevention and interpersonal relationship development.

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