

A study of the trends of the retired elderly in community service and development

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Research Introduction:

The number of elderly people is increasing in all developing societies, as it was about (590) million in (2000) and reached about (976) million people in (2020) worldwide, that number almost doubled in 20 years only, as a result of the increased interest of societies in health and well-being of the elderly, and thus for they can now have a good physical, mental, psychological, and emotional health that allows them to pursue work, to make the best of their abundant experiences they have acquired in both social & professional life. Giving them the opportunity to contribute to the development and service their local communities.

Among the important groups that must be optimally utilized is elderly people, they should not be overlooked, their role is no less important in helping to confront this pandemic than adults or youth (13).

Benefiting from retired elderly people in development and community services can take many new aspects commensurate with their capabilities, experiences and the nature of the current stage in their lives (10).

The importance of benefiting from the elderly lies in their experiences in training, development and transfer of expertise to younger people, which contributes to the development of their capabilities, and career experiences, so they become professionals and experts and have full knowledge of work and its secrets, which drives development in societies and helps in overcoming crises (1). Also, the retired elderly feel that they have an active role and a real participation in the development of their societies instead of feeling that they have nothing more to provide, which leads to their suffering from apathy, depression, and be prone to diseases, so they become more of an obstacle to development instead of drivers towards it. (2)

It is also possible to benefit from the retired elderly people in setting up small business projects and thus contribute in solving the economic crises and providing job opportunities for younger people, and providing the community with a good national product; by creating these small business projects with the help of the competent authorities, they can also use their energy, time and experience in charitable work and maybe supervise it as well. Such as contributing to reducing illiteracy and enhancing education ... etc. (11)

Research Concern:

According to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics report on (9/1/2019), the number of retired elderly people ranges between (60 to 70) years old in Egypt is (6.5) million

people. While the number in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reached (1.7) million as it was stated in the report of the General Authority for Statistics in (2019); this huge number of people can provide significant services that can help developing the society. Benefiting from the retired elderly has various and different methods, but needs the support from public institutions and the concerted efforts of all involved parties in the society (2). Studies have shown that there is no clear mechanism for communicating with retirees to benefit from them in their area of expertise, which has affected many of them negatively, especially those with rare and distinguished expertise and specialties, and accordingly this neglect is turning them from a human wealth that can be used into a burden that our developing Arab societies are struggling with specifically in this critical period. (11)

The problem that all countries are currently facing great crises, due to the impact of Corona pandemic, which requires benefiting from the efforts of all of its citizens at all ages, especially the elderly, who if they do not exploit their energies and the distinguished experience that they gained in different life activities in carrying out new activities that are appropriate for their age and contribute to solving the crises and problems resulting from the Corona pandemic, they will turn into a burden to development, as a result of the leisure-time and psychological problems that may lead to weakening their immunity system, making it easier for them to get infected with Corona virus, so the current crises facing all societies will be exacerbated.

The current research is illustrating the importance and urge to study the dynamics & behaviors of the retired elderly of both sex, with different educational and financial backgrounds, and their participation level in community service and society development, by answering the following questions:

1. What are the statistically significant differences in the behaviors of the retired elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development according to the study variables (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income).
2. Is there a correlation between the dynamics of the retired elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development according to the study variables (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income).
3. Does the percentage of the influencing factors (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income) affect the behaviors of the elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and its development.
4. Do the relative weights of the fields that the retired elderly (study sample) want to participate in from Egypt and Saudi Arabia?

Research Importance:

The current research results are shedding the light on:

1. Elderly retired people who still have the ability to give and work to contribute to the development and progress of their societies.
2. Merging the youth and elderly people having the same profession, to transfer their experience so that young people can begin their career life with all the experiences needed.

3. Contributing to the reduction of the bad psychological and physical effects that the elderly face, resulting more burdens especially on developing societies, by instilling hope in them to continue working and participating in the development and service of society.
4. Contributing to spreading the culture of benefiting from the capabilities and experiences of retired elderly in Arab societies.

Research Objectives:

The current research aims to reveal:

1. The statistically significant differences in the behaviors of the retired elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development according to the study variables (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income).
2. The correlation between the dynamics of the retired elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development according to the study variables (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income).
3. The percentage of the influencing factors (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income) affect the behaviors of the elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and its development.
4. The relative weights of the fields that the retired elderly (study sample) want to participate in community services and development.

Research Hypotheses:

1. There are statistically significant differences in the behaviors of the retired elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development according to the study variables (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income).
2. There is a correlation between the dynamics of the retired elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development according to the study variables (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income).
3. The percentage of the influencing factors (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income), does affect the behaviors of the elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development.
4. The relative weights differ, in the fields that the retired elderly (study sample) want to participate in community services and development.

Procedural concepts of the research terms:

Elderly: is used in this research to define seniors who are (60) years old and above, and in good health (1).

The retired elderly: is used in this research to define retired seniors between (60) & (70) years old, who are still able to work and in good health.

Dynamics & behaviors: a hypothetical concept, which represents the level of an individual's like or dislike for a specific topic. Attitudes are generally positive or negative towards a person, place, thing, or an event. (3)

The meaning of dynamics & behaviors in this study: a continuous tendency to respond in a coordinated manner to certain things, attitudes, and individuals. Dynamics & behaviors include a set of feelings and emotions directed at specific goals.

Community services and development: a process of educational change based on teamwork that takes its way within the community and leads to improvement in living standards (10).

The meaning of community services and development in this study: The process of building a strong and distinguished community in many different and varied areas and fields.

Research methodology:

This research follows the descriptive analytical method.

Research limits:

Objective limits: studying the dynamics & behaviors of retired elderly people and their participation level in community services and development, according to the variables of this research and identifying the areas in which the retired elderly (study sample) wish to participate in the services and development of the community.

Human limits: The research sample was collected by (200) elderly and retired elderly participants ranging between (60) to (70) years old.

Spatial limits: The search was applied in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Time limits: This research was applied in the time period between MAR to AUG - 2020.

Study Tools:

The research tools included:

First part: included the primary data of the research samples.

Second part: included a questionnaire on (the dynamics & behaviors of the retired elderly and their participation level in community services and development).

Key Findings:

1. There are statistically significant differences in the behaviors of the retired elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development according to the study variables (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income).
2. There is a correlation between the dynamics of the retired elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development according to the study variables (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income).
3. The percentage of the influencing factors (gender - educational background – the profession before retirement - monthly income), does affect the behaviors of the elderly (study sample) and their level of participation in community services and development.
4. The relative weights differ, in the fields that the retired elderly (study sample) want to participate in community services and development.

Recommendations & Proposals:

1. Establishing a database for retired elderly people who want to employ their experiences and invest their time, in society to benefit from the experiences of this rich group and benefit the society, especially during critical times that societies pass through such as the Corona pandemic, and also to benefit the retired elderly by investing their time after retirement and encouraging them to face a lot of retirement problems.
2. Establishing a unified database for the Arab community for retired elderly people who wish to work and those with rare specialties to exchange experiences and benefit from them in all Arab countries.
3. Conducting more studies that are concerned with this field, as they are a human wealth who have their own characteristics, they are also considered a double-edged sword, either they'll help in providing more community services and push their societies towards development or be a burden if neglected.
4. Concerting efforts between all concerned parties and institutions to provide appropriate fields of work and services that the community needs, which commensurate with the age & characteristics of the elderly people, to benefit from their abilities to work and give back to the society.

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