

P-1022 - PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT OF OLDER ADULTS: MEASURING THE IMPACT ON AGING

S.V.Humboldt, I.P.Leal

UIPES, Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada, Lisbon, Portugal

Introduction: There has been little attention in the research literature on the relationships between psychological adjustment and aging.

Objectives: This research aims at examining the relationships between older adults' psychological adjustment, and aging.

Methods: The measures used to in the study were selected to assess the reliability and validity of one new instrument, Adjustment to Aging Schedule (ATAS). Measures were completed using a variety of culturally appropriate methods, including mail-outs, self-administration and interviews. For the purposes of this study, the Health Survey Questionnaire (SF-6D), one measure of cognitive functioning - the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) and demographics, were included. All variables had fewer than 2% missing values and there complete data were available for 212 older adults (mean age 86.2, SD = 5.4, (range 74-101)) from eight different nationalities. Exploratory factor analyses were run for data reduction and for exploring theoretical structure. Controlling for age, gender and country of origin, we assessed the level of psychological adjustment of elderly people, and its impact on aging.

Results: Psychological adjustment appears to be a catalyst to attitudinal markers of maturity and internal development which in turn impact aging, across cultures. All estimates were statistically significant ($p < .01$).

Conclusions: This cross-cultural study illuminates links among psychological adjustment and aging in older age, warranting further study across cultures among frailer populations over time. Recommendations for future research on older adults' psychological adjustment and clinical interventions are also presented.