

Flourishing in Old Age

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Flourishing implies an optimal state of mental health, in which the individual feels and functions positively^[1,2]. Thus, flourishers enjoy good mental and physical health and resilience in life's vulnerabilities and changes^[3] and report higher levels of satisfaction with life, involvement, meaning, healthier relationships, and longevity^[4]. Several authors use the concept of flourishing as a comprehensive term synonymous with Well-being. It encompasses not only emotional well-being but also psychological and social Well-being and allows integration of hedonic and eudaimonic theories of Well-Being^[5]. **OBJECTIVES:** This study approximates factors contributing to flourishing among the elderly through their perception of mental health, satisfaction with life, positive and negative affects, meaning in life, optimism or pessimism, positive and negative emotions, and mindfulness attention. **METHODS:** To this end, we conducted a non-experimental correlational study with 329 participants, aged from 55 to 98 years. Questionnaires were used to collect data through the following instruments: socio-demographic questionnaire, Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS - Brown and Ryan, 2003), Satisfaction with life Scale (SWLS - Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin, 1985), Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS - Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), Flourishing scale (FS - Diener et al. 2010), Positivity test (PST - Fredrickson, 2009), Mental Health Inventory – 5 (MHI-5 - (Berwick, et al., Performance of a Five-Item Mental Health Screening Test, 1991), Meaning Life Questionnaire (MLQ - Steger, Frazier, Oishi, and Kaler, 2006) Extended Life Oriented Test (ELOT - Chang, Maydeu-Olivares, and D'Zurilla, 1997). **RESULTS:** Results showed the Flourishing Scale presents a positive relation with the predictive variables - SWLS (B = 0,122, $p= 0.001$), PANAS: PA (B = 0.397, $p< 0.001$), MLQ - search (B = 0.133, $p= 0.001$), MLQ - presence (B = 0.204, $p<0.001$) and ELOT - optimism (B = 0.130, $p= 0.046$) - statistically significant. **CONCLUSIONS:** The positive associations revealed in this work are a starting point for intervention and encouragement of flourishing in old age. The existing literature informs us that flourishing is within the reach of all. It can be accomplished by cultivating positive emotions, discovering meaning and purpose while staying genuinely engaged in daily activities and pursuing

positive relationships with our communities. We can conclude that the meaning of life, mindfulness attention, positive emotions and optimism are important factors for the flourishing and good predictors for ageing well.

Keywords: *Ageing, Flourishing, Well-Being*

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**Health & Well-Being
Intervention**

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May 31st and June 1st 2019

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