

Understanding The Determinants Of Successful Longevity

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Background

Centenarians have long been regarded as paradigms for successful ageing due to their extreme survivorship [1][2]. Centenarians are the fastest growing age demographic globally and current trajectories are indicative of this trend continuing. There exists a need to understand this shift in societal ageing so that the factors contributing to healthy longevity can be identified in order to best prepare for the future needs of society as we age. The unprecedented growth of centenarian population cohorts and the heterogeneity in their phenotypes has led the realisation that although the role of genetics is irrefutable weight must be given to the other factors contributing to their health and wellbeing [3][4].

Research Objective

The aim of this research is to extend the body of knowledge concerning the factors which have influenced the health and wellbeing of an individual aged over 100 years living in Ireland by identifying the factors that have influenced positively or otherwise on the persons health and longevity.

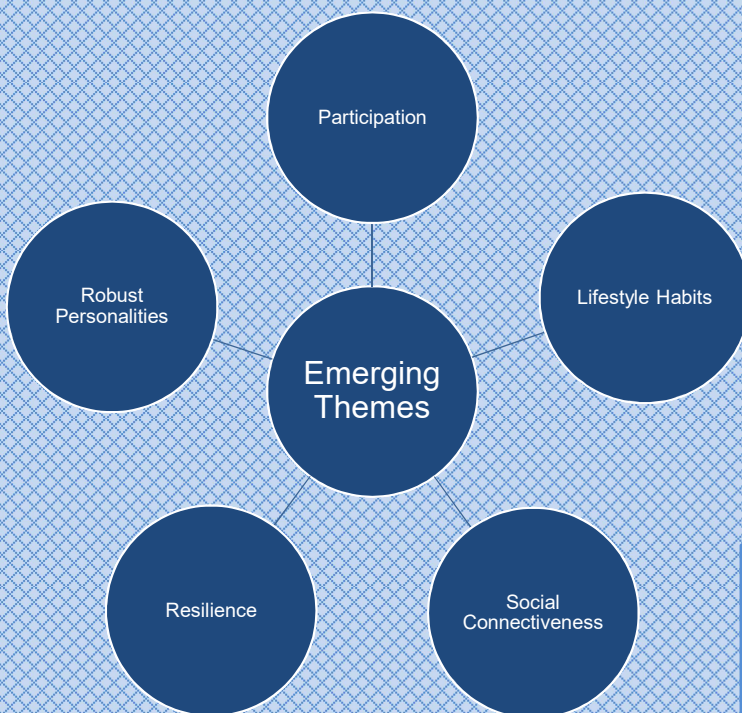


Methods

This qualitative study employed story telling through interview to give the centenarians a voice in exploring what they perceived as being the factors that contributed to their health and wellbeing as they aged from a biopsychosocial standpoint.

Analysis

Research interviews were collated and transcribed and NVivo software was used to develop the initial codes, subordinate themes and finally superordinate themes



Conclusion

Although considered the 'oldest old', participants were in good physical and cognitive health suggesting high resilience and adaptability to age-associated challenges. Participants maintained the ability to perform activities of daily living independently further highlighting their desire to continue leading autonomous lifestyles' even in advanced age. Higher emphasis was placed on psycho-social determinants of health with less placed on the biological or physical factors affecting health.

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