

# INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON AGING & GERONTOLOGY

## MAY 27-28, 2019 | ROME, ITALY

### Implications of Active Aging on Aging Well: Mixed-Methods Quantitative–Qualitative Study

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**I**ntroduction: Worldwide, the ratio of people age 60 and over is growing faster than any other age group. By 2025, there will be 1.2 billion people over the age of 60. With increasing number of older adults; aging well becomes a priority, and measures to help older people remain healthy and active are developing to be an important area of research. The concept of active aging intends to extend healthy life expectancy and quality of life for all people as they age, including those who are frail and in need of care. This study aims to explore the implications of active aging on aging well among older adults' ≥60 years.

**Methods:** Quantitative data were collected (176 participants, mean age:  $68.15 \pm 6.74$ ), using a demographic clinical questionnaire, a physical activity socio-cultural adapted questionnaire, EuroQuol-5 Dimensions and Physical functioning tests (Hand Grip Strength, Timed Up and Go, and Short Physical Performance Battery). Statistical analyses were performed to determine differences between the groups according to gender, prevalence of comorbid conditions and physical activity level. For the qualitative data, a qualitative research design in the context of focus group discussions and in depth personal interviews were used; seven focus groups included 56 participants and 17 participants were personally interviewed (aged 63–84 years). Data were analyzed using a qualitative thematic approach described by Braun and Clarke and a narrative interpretative method.

**Results:** Physically active older adults recorded lower prevalence of chronic diseases including hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases ( $P < 0.001$ ). Older adults who participated in moderate-intensity aerobic PA for 150 min/week have recorded higher values of physical functioning and health related quality of life (HRQoL) than older adults who were classified as low physically active ( $p < 0.001$ ). Staying active was perceived as an important factor to maintain functioning and to preserve active roles with aging. Five themes were identified, "keep moving, stay healthy," "social connectedness, a motive to stay active," "staying independent", "having a life purpose" and "enjoying good physical and mental health".

**Conclusion:** Moderate to high level of physical activity may contribute to maintain physical functioning and better HRQoL among community dwelling older adults above 60 years old. Active aging contributes to aging well; that was manifested in this study through enhancing health related quality of life, good physical and mental health, physically active lifestyle, social participation, and being independent.

#### Biography

Dr. Hadeel Halaweh holds a doctoral degree in medical sciences from the University of Gothenburg /Sweden. She works as an assistant professor at Al-Quds University/Faculty of Health Professions. Dr. Hadeel's research interests focus on the areas of health care, physical activity, Neuro-rehabilitation, gerontology, and health-related quality of life; her recent publications have included both quantitative and qualitative studies in the field of gerontology.