

International Scientific
and Professional Conference

HUMAN RIGHTS
IN FOCUS

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



November 27, 2024
Novi Sad, Serbia





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Autonomous Province of Vojvodina
Provincial Protector of Citizens - Ombudsman



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Faculty of Law



University of Kragujevac
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TIME PERSPECTIVE AMONG THE ELDERLY IN NURSING HOMES IN THE AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA (SERBIA)

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Abstract: Time perspective represents a cognitive framework through which individuals organize, evaluate and experience past, present and future events. This orientation toward time significantly influences decision-making, emotional well-being, and overall quality of life. For the elderly, time perspective becomes particularly important as aging brings challenges such as health problems, loss of independence and social changes, as well as adaptation to these life changes. **Aim:** The aim of this research is to examine how elderly individuals in nursing homes perceive their past, present, and future. The study seeks to identify dominant patterns of time perspective (e.g., positive past, fatalistic present, future orientation) and that can impact on the quality of life of nursing home residents. **Methods:** This study is designed as a cross-sectional study initiated in May 2024. The results presented provide a snapshot of analyzed data collected up to September 2024, while the research remains ongoing. The current sample consists of 249 participants from 10 nursing homes in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. Data were collected using an online questionnaire, administered by trained interviewers during face-to-face interviews with the residents in nursing homes. The TP-18 time perspective assessment scale (shortened adapted version) developed by Nedeljković and Kostić (2017) is based on Zimbardo's Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) with a focus on five main time dimensions (Positive Past, Negative Past, Hedonistic Present, Fatalistic Present, and Future). **Results:** The sample consisted of 67.9% female and 32.1% male participants, with an average age of 77.77 ± 9.465 . Results of this study show that

elderly often tend to rely more on memories and reflections about the past (30.3%). This past can be viewed through either positive or negative perspective. Elderly who recall their lives with satisfaction often demonstrate a higher level of psychological well-being. These individuals are prone to feelings of gratitude for their experiences and achievements, which helps them face the challenges of aging (41.4%). On the other hand, elderly who focus on negative past experiences (18%) may experience feelings of regret, sadness, or guilt, which can lead to depression and anxiety. For elderly, the future can be perceived as time-limited and uncertain (12.7%), leading to a decreased emphasis on long-term planning. Many elderly focus less on the distant future and more on short-term goals or current activities (15.4%). This reduced focus on the future may encourage elderly to concentrate more on the present moment and appreciate small pleasures in life, which is often associated with greater life satisfaction. However, the sense that the future is limited (29%) can provoke fear of death or feelings of loss of control over one's own life among some elderly. **Conclusions:** Time perspective plays a key role in the lives of elderly nursing home residents, influencing their outlook on life, mental health and overall well-being. Better understanding how older adults perceive the past, present and future can aid in tailoring support strategies that allow them to cope with the challenges of aging in a way that promotes a positive relationship with time and their life experiences.

Keywords: time perspective, mental health, elderly, nursing homes, public health, Vojvodina, Serbia.