The effect of life satisfaction on the silver generation's spa recognition and preferences

Ga Hui Park, PhD¹ , Eun-Ju Kang, PhD² , Seung-Hee Seo, PhD²

¹Department of Beauty Science, Gwangju University, Gwangju, Rep. of Korea, ²Department of Cosmetology, Dongshin University, Naju, Rep. of Korea

Background: Although the spa industry is becoming increasingly popular as it is integrated and combined with the aesthetic, cosmetic, medical, food, apparel, and amusement park industries, research and development on spas for the silver generation is still lacking.

Objective: The present study aimed to analyze satisfaction with life (SwL), spa perception, and spa program preferences of the silver generation with the objective of using the findings to develop spa programs that are actually needed by the growing elderly population, and provide basic data for the revitalization of the spa market.

Methods: The study population consisted of people aged 60 years and older—also known as the silver generation—who were visitors at tourist sites in Damyang-gun, Jeollanam-do (South Korea).

Results: The results showed that the silver generation's self-esteem was highly correlated with their spa perception, while those with high SwL reported a high number of responses for "body massage/body treatment." Regarding the appropriate cost of a single program, "Korean Won (KRW) 30,000–49,999" was the most common response among respondents with high SwL and "less than KRW 30,000" was the most common response among respondents with low SwL. Regarding the ideal combined program services, "special facial care+massage+care using water" was the most common response among respondents with high SwL, while "massage+care using water+total relaxation care" was the most common response among respondents with SwL.

Conclusion: The silver generation's SwL was found to be mutually associated with spa perception and spa program preferences. Therefore, the study's findings could be used as basic data for the development of programs tailored for the silver generation and increase the positive perception about spas and the development of spa programs that consider the characteristics of people with high or low SwL.

Keywords: satisfaction with life; silver generation; spa awareness; spa program preferences

Introduction

For centuries, spas have been used around the world as a form of treatment and relaxation. Recently, spas have been recognized as healing spaces of wellness industries with aromatherapy, massage therapy, stone therapy, color therapy,

hydrotherapy, Dallas therapy, mind therapy, sound therapy, body wrap therapy, yoga and meditation, diet, and exercise prescription, among others. Spas have evolved far beyond the concept of simple bathing or hot springs [1]. Spas have long traditions and characteristics in countries throughout the world, but in Korea, the spa industry is still in a developmental phase,

Received February 27, 2020; Revised April 26, 2020; Accepted May 6, 2020

Corresponding author: Seung-Hee Seo

E-mail: ssh@dsu.ac.kr

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0>), which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Copyright © 2020 Korean Society of Korean Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine (KSKCS & KCCS).

with the exception of jjimjilbang (Korean sauna) and bathing culture. Recently, the New York Times published major exposés on the traditional Korean method of Bulgamajjimjilbang using charcoal, which received recognition from New Yorkers who preferred American-styled spas which placed importance on the enhancement of a healthy lifestyle. As Korean-style spas using hardwood charcoal, ocher, and jade have spread throughout the United States, they are playing a major role in the new consumer culture [2].

The current silver generation is different from previous generations in that it no longer relies on children for support, and strives for a healthy, enjoyable, and abundant life with high self-consciousness and economic power [3]. Accordingly, in keeping with the social atmosphere that has a greater interest in well-aging, the implication of which goes beyond mere well-being and anti-aging, it is highly likely that the silver generation will form the main consumer base of the future spa industry. In modern society, the spa industry receives significant attention as one of the solutions for resolving psychological and physical problems faced by the elderly. While the spa industry is becoming increasingly popular as it is integrated and combined with the aesthetic, cosmetic, medical, food, apparel, and amusement park industries, research and development on spas for the silver generation is still lacking. Therefore, this study suggests that the spa industry will be valued by modern people who are increasing the value of life and pursuing healthy beauty. In addition, it was necessary to survey the silver generation's awareness of spas and their preference of spa programs in the aging society. Spa awareness means knowing the concept and definition of a spa and the characteristics of a spa program. There are many spa programs to suit specific locations and purposes. In this study, we investigated various spa programs such as full body care (body massage), special body care (body treatment), facial care (facial massage), facial special care (facial treatment), massage therapy, water treatment (hydro therapy), and psychiatric stability management (mind therapy).

The present study aimed to analyze satisfaction with life (SwL), spa perception, and spa program preferences of the silver generation with the objective of using the findings to develop spa programs that are actually needed by the growing elderly population and to provide basic data for the revitalization of the spa market.

Materials and methods

Study population and data collection

The study population consisted of people aged ≥ 60 years, representing the silver generation, who were visitors at Metasequoia road tourist sites in Damyang-gun, Jeollanam-do (South Korea). A total of 400 self-reporting questionnaires were distributed between July 2 and 31, 2016. For those who do not know Hangul or who are too old to fill out the survey, the researchers wrote their own answers. After excluding questionnaires with insincere or incomplete responses, data from a total of 338 questionnaires returned were used in the final analysis.

Measurement tool

The study's measurement tool was a questionnaire consisting of items to investigate the demographic characteristics, spa perception, and the silver generation's SwL. The questionnaire was constructed by modifying and supplementing questionnaires used by previous researchers Shin [4], Choi [5], and Kim [6]. The questionnaire consisted of six areas: general characteristics, spa awareness, spa program preferences, and life satisfaction. The 5-point Likert scale was used as a measurement tool for each variable. The survey contents in this study are reported in Table 1 [7-9].

Analytical methods

Data collected from the questionnaires were empirically analyzed to determine the realistic validity of the hypotheses derived based on theory. IBM SPSS ver. 21.0 (IBM Corp., Ar-

Table 1. The survey contents of this study

Category	Survey content	The number of question	Reference
General characteristic	Sex, age (yr), highest educational attainment has a spouse, has a religion, lives with children, health status, financial difficulties	9	[7,9]
Spa perception	Spa awareness, spa program awareness	2	
Preferred program of spa	Appropriate length (min), Appropriate cost (Korean won), Appropriate cost (Korean won), Number of program services, Appropriate combined program services, Appropriate length of combined program (min), Appropriate cost of combined program (Korean won)	7	
Satisfaction with life	Satisfaction with life, Financial difficulties	5	[8]
Total		23	

monk, NY, USA) was used to analyze the inter-item reliability of the questionnaire, while descriptive statistical analysis was performed to determine the mean and standard deviation (SD) of the self-esteem and SwL of the silver generation. A t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were performed to investigate differences in SwL according to the general sample characteristics of the respondents, while the chi-squared (χ^2) test was performed to investigate differences in spa program preferences according to SwL. p-values of less than 0.05 were considered significant.

Results

Spa perception according to the general characteristics of the silver generation

Table 2 reports differences in spa perception according to general characteristics of the silver generation. With respect to differences in spa perception, females scored 1.96, while males scored 1.70, indicating that spa perception was higher among females than males ($p < 0.01$). Moreover, those between ages 60–64 years scored 1.63, while those who were 75 years and older scored 2.25, which indicated that spa perception was higher in the younger age group ($p < 0.001$). With respect to highest edu-

Table 2. Spa awareness according of silver generation the general characteristics

Category	Score	T-test (F-value)	Post-hoc
Sex		3.024**	-
Male	1.70 (0.77)		
Female	1.96 (0.75)		
Age (yr)		8.422***	②,③,④>① ④>②
60–64	1.63 (0.74)		
65–69	1.86 (0.73)		
70–74	2.02 (0.83)		
≥75	2.25 (0.74)		
Highest educational attainment		7.756***	②,③,④>①
Primary school graduate	2.08 (0.80)		
Middle school graduate	1.77 (0.68)		
High school graduate	1.61 (0.73)		
College graduate or higher	1.63 (0.82)		
Has a spouse		3.643***	-
No	2.05 (0.81)		
Yes	1.71 (0.74)		
Has a religion		-1.378	-
No	1.73 (0.75)		
Yes	1.85 (0.79)		
Lives with children		-0.476	-
No	1.79 (0.78)		
Yes	1.83 (0.76)		
Health status		29.141***	②,③>① ③>②
Poor	2.40 (0.72)		
Average	1.78 (0.71)		
Good	1.51 (0.72)		
Financial difficulty		11.478***	②,③>① ③>②
Difficult	2.16 (0.84)		
Average	1.84 (0.75)		
Good	1.57 (0.70)		

Values are presented as mean (SD).

** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

cational attainment, high school graduates, college graduates or higher and primary school graduates scored 1.61, 1.63, and 2.08, respectively, indicating that spa perception was generally higher in individuals with higher educational attainment ($p<0.001$). The results also confirmed that spa perception was higher for those who had a spouse, good health status, and no financial difficulties. In terms of religion and living with children and/or grandchildren, the results were not significant at a significance level of 5%. Respondents with high spa perception tended to be females who were younger and had high educational attainment, a spouse, good health status, and no financial difficulties. In a prior study, elderly females were found to have higher life satisfaction than elderly males; moreover, the lower the age group, the better the average monthly allowance and health status, and the higher the self-esteem [10]. In addition, the previous study on the related variables affecting life satisfaction of the elderly showed that the development of health programs for the elderly was important [11].

Satisfaction with life

Table 3 reports the results on SwL. The mean score (M) for overall SwL was 3.07 and highest to lowest mean SwL scores appeared in the order: "I am living well with no financial problems" ($M=3.18$), "I am satisfied with my life at this time" ($M=3.14$), "I am still living a life worth living" ($M=3.09$), "I believe I have an enjoyable and happy life" ($M=3.04$), and "My life is still just as interesting and fun as before" ($M=2.90$). Table 4 reports the SwL group results. Based on the mean SwL score, those with SwL score higher and lower than the mean were classified as high (49.4%) and low (50.6%) SwL groups, respectively.

Spa program preferences according to satisfaction with life

Table 5 reports the results of spa program preferences according to SwL. With respect to spa program preferences, the most preferred program in high and low SwL groups was the body massage/body treatment, followed by facial massage/

facial treatment in the high SwL group and massage therapy in the low SwL group ($\chi^2=17.917$, $p<0.01$). With respect to the appropriate cost of a single program, the most common response was Korean Won (KRW) 30,000–49,999 in the high SwL group and less than KRW 30,000 in the low SwL group ($\chi^2=54.088$, $p<0.001$). With respect to the appropriate number of program services, the most common response was three in the high SwL group and two in the low SwL group ($\chi^2=19.566$, $p<0.001$). For ideal combined program services, the most common response was special facial care+massage+care using water in the high SwL group, and massage+care using water+total relaxation care in the low SwL group ($\chi^2=25.459$, $p<0.01$), while for the appropriate cost of the combined services, the most common response was KRW 100,000–149,999 in the high SwL group and less than KRW 100,000 in the low SwL group ($\chi^2=26.027$, $p<0.001$). In other words, it was observed that high and low satisfaction in life affects spa program preferences. These results are believed to be closely related to the study's findings that middle-aged and elderly individuals plan to take care of aging, value prices and programs the most, and have a strong sense that getting skin care represents social position or culture [9]. In contrast to this study, research on the integrated health care method of the silver generation emphasized the importance of natural healing therapy and alternative medicine for the silver generation, focusing on yoga and Ayurveda, one of the spa programs [7]. These results suggest the need to study the overall management of the mind and body of the silver generation. Another study reported that massaging the hands, feet, and face was effective for depression and arousal in the mind and body [8]. In addition, self-beauty programs have a significant relationship with self-esteem, depression, and life satisfaction, and there is research suggesting the necessity of developing a beauty program considering the characteristics and tendencies of elderly women [12]. The findings of these previous studies also support those of this study. In addition, experienced silver generation consumers will need to develop spa programs and products that can be combined with core values for the modern silver generation, referring to previous studies which show that

Table 3. Life satisfaction

Category	Score
Satisfaction with life	3.07 (0.89)
I am satisfied with my life at this time	3.14 (0.98)
I believe I have an enjoyable and happy life	3.04 (0.97)
I am still living a life worth living	3.09 (0.98)
I am living well with no financial problems	3.18 (1.03)
My life is still just as interesting and fun as before	2.90 (1.01)

Values are presented as mean (SD).

Table 4. Life satisfaction group

Category	Frequency
Satisfaction with life	
High	167 (49.4)
Low	171 (50.6)
Overall	338 (100)

Values are presented as n (%).

Table 5. Preference of spa program according to life satisfaction of the silver generation

Category	High	Low	Overall	χ^2 (p)
Preferred program				17.917 (0.001)**
Body massage/body treatment	61 (36.5)	54 (31.6)	115 (34.0)	
Facial massage/facial treatment	41 (24.6)	20 (11.7)	61 (18.0)	
Massage therapy	36 (21.6)	39 (22.8)	75 (22.2)	
Hydrotherapy	18 (10.8)	31 (18.1)	49 (14.5)	
Mind therapy	11 (6.6)	27 (15.8)	38 (11.2)	
Appropriate length (min)				4.273 (0.118)
<30	16 (9.6)	16 (9.4)	32 (9.5)	
30–59	111 (66.5)	129 (75.4)	240 (71.0)	
≥60	40 (24.0)	26 (15.2)	66 (19.5)	
Appropriate cost (Korean won)				54.088 (0.000)***
<30,000	18 (10.8)	78 (45.6)	96 (28.4)	
30,000–49,999	80 (47.9)	59 (34.5)	139 (41.1)	
50,000–69,999	27 (16.2)	18 (10.5)	45 (13.3)	
≥70,000	42 (25.1)	16 (9.4)	58 (17.2)	
No. of program service				19.566 (0.000)***
2	64 (38.3)	97 (56.7)	161 (47.6)	
3	89 (53.3)	73 (42.7)	162 (47.9)	
≥4	14 (8.4)	1 (0.6)	15 (4.4)	
Preferred combined program service				25.459 (0.001)**
Whole-body care+facial care+special whole-body care	16 (9.6)	20 (11.7)	36 (10.7)	
Facial care+special whole-body care+special facial care	11 (6.6)	9 (5.3)	20 (5.9)	
Special whole-body care+special facial care+massage	28 (16.8)	12 (7.0)	40 (11.8)	
Special facial care+massage+care using water	39 (23.4)	19 (11.1)	58 (17.2)	
Massage+care using water+ total relaxation care	25 (15.0)	45 (26.3)	70 (20.7)	
Care using water+ total relaxation care+whole-body care	13 (7.8)	28 (16.4)	41 (12.1)	
Total relaxation care+whole-body care+facial care	11 (6.6)	14 (8.2)	25 (7.4)	
Care using water+whole-body care+facial care	20 (12.0)	20 (11.7)	40 (11.8)	
Others	4 (2.4)	4 (2.3)	8 (2.4)	
Appropriate length of combined program (min)				5.237 (0.155)
<90	58 (34.7)	55 (32.2)	113 (33.4)	
90–119	54 (32.3)	70 (40.9)	124 (36.7)	
120–149	34 (20.4)	35 (20.5)	69 (20.4)	
≥150	21 (12.6)	11 (6.4)	32 (9.5)	
Appropriate cost of combined program (Korean won)				26.027 (0.000)***
<100,000	44 (26.3)	78 (45.6)	122 (36.1)	
100,000–149,999	54 (32.3)	61 (35.7)	115 (34.0)	
150,000–199,999	37 (22.2)	23 (13.5)	60 (17.8)	
≥200,000	32 (19.2)	9 (5.3)	41 (12.1)	
Overall	167 (100)	171 (100)	338 (100)	

Values are presented as n (%).

p<0.01, *p<0.001.

they have strict standards, which make it important to improve quality of life, such as healthy aging, active lifestyles, and family ties [13].

Discussion

Based on the awareness and preference of spas among the silver generation, we suggested the following spa programs. The silver generation, regardless of high or low SwL, seems to

prefer the body massage/body treatment, which is considered effective in relieving body fatigue or pain as aging progresses. Furthermore, if the program is configured to last 30 to 60 minutes or less, it will improve the silver generation's satisfaction of the spa program, regardless of their level of life satisfaction. The following spa programs are therefore proposed for the silver generation with high living satisfaction: the ideal cost should be less than KRW 30,000–50,000 and the program should be configured to consist of three treatments—special management+massage+water. Moreover, the optimal cost of the composite program should be less than KRW 100,000–150,000. If designed for the silver generation with low life satisfaction, the ideal cost should be less than KRW 30,000, with the composite program consisting of two services—massage+water management plus mental and mental stability management as an ideal composite program configuration—and the optimal cost for this composite program should be less than KRW 100,000.

These findings indicate that SwL is deeply associated with, and has a significant influence on, the silver generation's spa perception and spa program preferences. This study was conducted in July 2016 and it was passed three years. However, the research of the spa program recognition and preference for silver generation were not reported yet. For this reason, this study is important as research of the initial stage to discuss about the spa program recognition and preference for silver generation. Therefore, it is anticipated that the findings in the present study could be used as basic data for the development of programs tailored for the silver generation that can expand the positive perception about spas and development of spa programs that consider the characteristics of people with high or low SwL. However, the present study has certain limitations. As the study population of the empirical survey was limited to visitors at tourist sites in Damyang-gun, Jeollanam-do, the percentage of those residing in Gwangju or Jeollanam-do was disproportionately high. In order to increase the objectivity of future surveys, follow-up studies based on various characteristics such as diversity, life cycle and environment, and depression of the silver generation ought to be conducted.

It is hoped that these findings will assist in the development of professional spa programs for the silver generation and contribute to the development of the silver industry and the revitalization of the spa industry.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have nothing to disclose.

References

1. Kim JY, Yeo SJ, Kim JI. A study on current profile of domestic hotel spa programs. *J Korean Soc Esthet Cosmeceut* 2008;3:83-100.
2. Lee NR. A study on spa treatment propensities by comparing women in New York and Seoul [master's thesis]. Seoul: Han Sung University; 2011.
3. Huh WW. The influence of emotional value factors on the new silver generation's acceptance of digital media [dissertation]. Seoul: Seoul National University of Science and Technology; 2012.
4. Shin Y. Public awareness of SPA and their preferences for SPA programs [master's thesis]. Seoul: Chung-ang University; 2014.
5. Choi JA. A study on awareness and usage behavior of domestic spas, and current status of spa programs [master's thesis]. Seoul: Dong-Duk Women's University; 2014.
6. Kim NH. The effects of perceived successful aging of the elderly women on their self-esteem and life satisfaction- focused on the modulating effects of their mental aging [dissertation]. Seoul: Hoseo University; 2011.
7. Lee DB. A study on the holistic health care for the silver generation- focused on Yoga & Ayurveda - [master's thesis]. Iksan: Wonkwang University; 2011.
8. Lee MH. A study on image perception according to perceiver's social value and hair style variation. *Res J Costume Cult* 2004;12:971-83.
9. Kim E. A study on needs for senior-care industry in preparation for aging society: the case of skin-care programs geared toward middle-aged people in and around Seoul [master's thesis]. Seoul: Sookmyung Women's University; 2007.
10. Oh JE. The influence of the health related behavior of the senior in the satisfaction of life [master's thesis]. Daegu: Daegu Haany University; 2010.
11. Kim YM. The study of relative variable to the life satisfaction degree of old people - focus on the old people of Wonju city - [master's thesis]. Seoul: Kyung Hee University; 2002.
12. Kim BK. A self-beauty program's effect on female senior citizens' depression, self-respect and life satisfaction [dissertation]. Daegu: Keimyung University; 2007.
13. Shin JE. A study of food brand design for the new silver generation [dissertation]. Seoul: Seoul National University; 2020.