Synopsis of Original Research Paper

A Study on Elderly People's Cognitions of "an Elegant Elderly Lady"

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The purpose of this study was to examine the images held by elderly people about what "an elegant elderly lady" is like, and to clarify the qualities of such a lady. The subjects of this study were seven hundred and thirty five elderly people who were taking educational courses for the aged held at local community centers.They were asked to imagine two kinds of elderly ladies; One who was elegant, and another who was not elegant. Then they filled out questionnaires consisting of items dealing with their images and cognitions of their qualities. The main results were as follows:

1) The image ratings of an elegant elderly lady were analyzed by factor analysis. Two factors were extracted : leadership and maturity. The elderly people had images that an elegant elderly lady was superior to an inelegant elderly lady in such inner qualities as leadership and maturity.

2) The cognitive ratings of properties which she had were analyzed by factor analysis. Three factors were extracted : sophisticated appearance, economic capacity and make-up skills. The elderly people had cognitions that an elegant elderly lady was superior to an inelegant elderly lady in outer qualities as sophisticated-appearance, economic capacity and make-up skills.

3) Elegant elderly ladies were grouped into three clusters by cluster analysis : gold cluster, sophisticated cluster and executive cluster.