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Investigating the Determinants of Successful Aging: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Background: One proposed solution to address the challenges of aging is to promote the concept of successful aging and to coordinate various interdisciplinary institutions to lay the groundwork for its realization. The main purpose of this article is to look at research done on the factors that help people age successfully in various countries.

Methods: This study was conducted through searches in the PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science databases. The inclusion criteria were studies related to successful aging, published in English, and consisting of original research articles. Relevant articles were selected based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. A survey of the included articles was conducted according to a predefined classification.

Results: Among 3,203 studies, 76 articles met our inclusion criteria. Analysis showed that 67 (88%) of these articles applied determinants to achieve successful aging, while 9 (12%) employed determinants for successful aging in their studies. Although many studies used foundational models of successful aging and analyzed data from previous work with these models, they were not excluded and were included in the final analysis.

Conclusion: This review aimed to examine the determinants of successful aging identified in the selected articles and to highlight research gaps. The results revealed a decline in research interest in this field. Most studies focused on examining previously used determinants, while some provided new determinants of successful aging within their studied populations. Successful aging encompasses various dimensions that vary according to the culture and attitudes of different societies, warranting further attention. Among the articles that defined indicators of successful aging, access to a support system and health status were consistently identified as key indicators in all nine studies. This highlights the crucial role of both health and social support in achieving successful aging across different countries and cultural contexts.

Keywords: Successful Aging, Determinants, Systematic Review

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Introduction

Population aging is a widespread phenomenon that will affect all countries to varying degrees (1). Demographic shifts associated with population aging are expected to have numerous societal impacts and to impose substantial costs on healthcare systems. If not properly managed, an aging population can influence social systems in multiple ways (2). The process of aging is commonly perceived as a phase of life that involves gradual declines in physical, cognitive, and psychosocial functioning (3).

Given the interdisciplinary nature of aging and its impact on healthcare systems, one potential solution to address the challenges associated with population aging is to promote the concept of successful aging, combined with coordinated interdisciplinary management across various institutions to establish the necessary foundations for its implementation

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Key Messages:

↑What is "already known" in this topic:

- The global population is aging rapidly.
- Population aging places increasing pressure on healthcare systems.
- Health systems need effective strategies to respond to the challenges of an aging population.

→What this article adds:

- This study identifies key factors that contribute to successful aging.
- It highlights similarities and differences in the determinants of successful aging across countries.
- The findings provide evidence to support the development of policies and interventions that promote successful aging.

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(4). Be concept of successful aging challenges the stereotype that old age is inevitably associated with functional decline (5). Successful aging is a multidimensional concept. In a 2019 study titled "Definition of Successful Aging: A Brief Review of Multidimensional Concepts," Ortamo states that, according to the classical model proposed by Rowe and Kahn, successful aging is defined as maintaining high levels of physical, mental, and social functioning in older age without major diseases. This framework suggests that successful aging encompasses both psychological and physical dimensions. Psychological factors include effective psychological adjustment and active engagement in life, whereas physical factors involve physical functioning, cognitive functioning, and overall health (6). However, There is no single agreed-upon idea of what successful aging means, and the factors that influence it can vary depending on how it is defined and studied (7). In this study, we adopt the definition introduced by Rowe and Kahn as the foundational conceptual framework, emphasizing the maintenance of high physical, mental, and social functioning in later life in the absence of major diseases

Therefore, the primary aim of this article is to review studies examining the determinants of successful aging in different countries. The specific objectives of this review are: (1) to provide an overview of the published articles and their characteristics, and (2) to analyze the determinants of successful aging across various countries.

Methods

Study design and recruitment

This study was conducted in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) checklist to ensure the comprehensive inclusion of relevant studies (8). The systematic review was carried out using thematic synthesis, a qualitative analytical approach designed to synthesize related literature and generate novel insights (9).

Search Strategy

The databases used for this study included PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science. The search was conducted without temporal restrictions and using English keywords across all search engines, including “criteria,” “benchmark*,” “metrics,” “determinant,” “successful aging,” “active aging,” “healthy aging,” “productive aging,” “aging well,” “robust aging,” “optimal aging,” “positive aging,” “effective aging,” and “successful aging.” These keywords were selected based on preliminary searches aligned with our study goals. The keywords were validated, and additional terms were added by reviewing those used in articles identified during the preliminary searches. Boolean search strategies were employed as shown in Figure 1.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Study Selection

Articles were included if they met the following criteria:

The focus of the study was on successful aging.

The studies were published in English.

The elderly participants lived at home or in a nursing home. Full-text access to the articles was available.

Articles were excluded if they met the following criteria.

They were theses, book chapters, letters to the editor, short briefs, technical reports, conference presentations, book reviews, systematic reviews, or meta-analyses.

They were non-English papers.

The studies focused on the index of clinically successful aging.

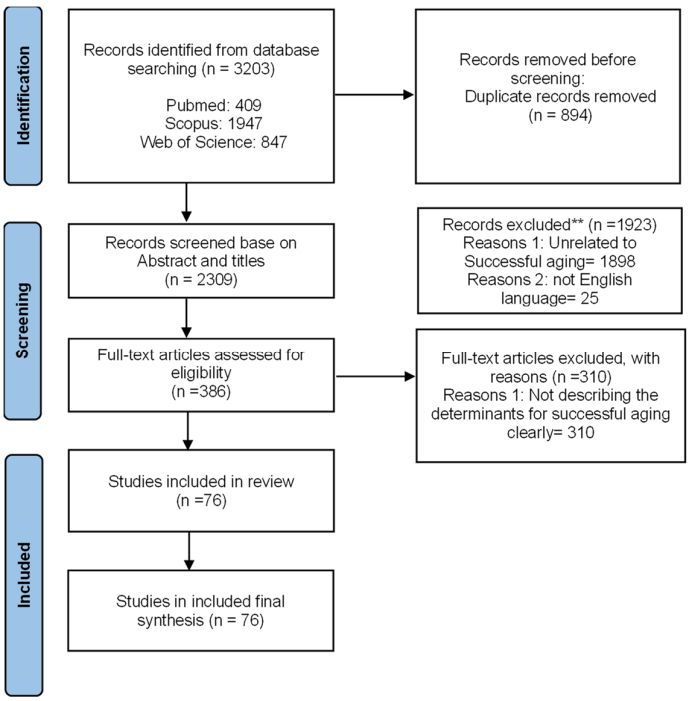


Figure 1. The flow diagram for the identification, screening, and eligibility of studies

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The elderly participants were hospitalized.

Data Extraction Phase

Based on our search strategy, a total of 3,203 articles were retrieved. The screening process, conducted according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, is illustrated in Figure 1. All titles and abstracts were independently reviewed by two reviewers to identify studies relevant to the main objectives and research questions. A second author examined a random sample of studies for validation. Subsequently, 188 articles meeting the inclusion criteria were selected for full-text review. The full texts were thoroughly assessed by two reviewers, and any disagreements were resolved by a third reviewer. Ultimately, 76 studies were determined to be relevant for inclusion in the review.

Certain groups were created to sort and study the articles that were included. The researchers developed extraction forms to systematically manage and evaluate the collected information. To minimize bias, key information from each article was summarized and entered into customized forms according to the predefined categories. Two authors independently reviewed each article and extracted the relevant study characteristics. The results were then compared, and any differences were discussed and rechecked until agreement was reached. A third reviewer verified and validated the extracted information. EndNote software was used for reference management, and all data synthesis and analyses were conducted using SPSS.

Quality Appraisal

The methodological quality of all included studies was assessed using the appropriate Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Critical Appraisal Checklists, according to each study's design (analytical cross-sectional, cohort, case-control, or qualitative). All 78 articles underwent this rigorous evaluation by two reviewers to determine their suitability for final review, and any disagreements were resolved through discussion or consultation with a third reviewer.. For each checklist item, responses were recorded as Yes, No, Unclear, or Not applicable. The total number of "Yes" responses was used to classify the overall methodological quality of each study as high (≥75%), moderate (50–74%), or low (<50%). The results of the quality assessment informed the interpretation of the findings and were used as exclusion criteria.

Results

In this review, 3,203 documents were initially retrieved through searches of scientific databases. After screening titles and abstracts, 3,127 documents were excluded, leaving 76 articles for inclusion in this review. A qualitative analysis was then conducted to summarize the findings.

Study Characteristics

All included articles related to various dimensions of successful aging. In total, 76 journal articles were eligible for inclusion. The distribution of the reviewed studies by publication year is shown in Figure 2. These articles were published between 2001 and 2023, with the majority appearing after 2015.

The frequency of articles by continent is presented in Table 1, categorized by the number and percentage of published articles. As seen in the table, Asia ranks first among the continents, with 29 articles (37%), indicating that a significant number of studies on successful aging have focused on the elderly population in this region.

The outcome of quality assessment

All included studies were appraised using the relevant JBI checklists. Out of the 76 studies, 71 were rated as high quality,5 as moderate, and there were no low quality item. Table 2 presents a summary of the methodological quality assessment of the included studies.

Sample Size and Data Sources

The sample size in the 76 studies ranged from 12 to 73,942 participants.

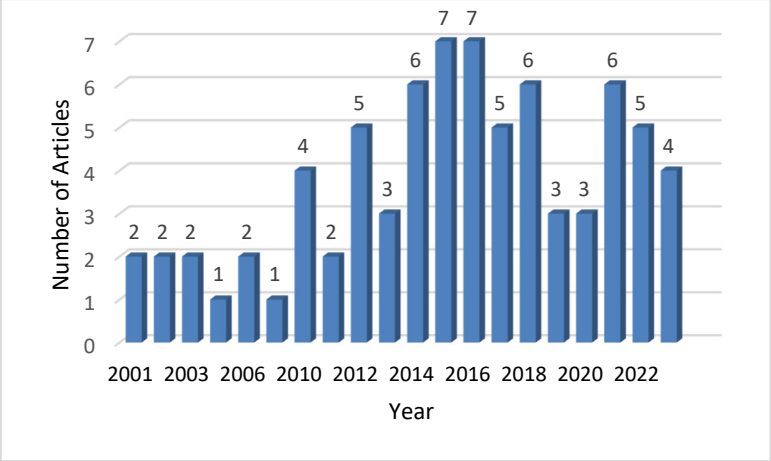


Figure 2. The Distribution of Papers by Publication Year

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Table 1. Distribution of studies by continent (N=76)

Continent	Frequency	Percentage
Africa	2	3
Asia	29	37
Europe	20	26
North America	19	25
Oceania	3	4
South America	3	4
Total	٧6	100

The Distribution of Applied Determinants to Define Successful Aging

The analysis showed that 67 articles (88%) used relevant models to examine successful aging, while 9 articles (12%) presented specific determinants of successful aging in their studies. Given that many studies utilized the basic model of successful aging and analyzed data from previous studies using these models, these articles were not excluded from the review. Among the articles that employed basic models, 39 referenced Rowe and Kahn's model.

Target Group

Among the 76 studies, the age range of participants was 60 years or older in 59 articles, while 17 articles included participants younger than 60 years.

The Distribution of Data Collection Tools

Among the included articles, the most frequently used data collection tool was the questionnaire (58%), while the least used were national telephone surveys (1%) and observation (1%). The distribution of data collection tools is shown in Figure 3.

Table 2. Quality of Included Studies appraisal checklist

Study	Design	Total Score	Quality Level
Lifestyle predictors of successful aging: A 20- year prospective HUNT study (24)	Cohort	24/28	High
The Challenge of Maintaining Successful Aging at 87 Years Old: The Octabaix Study Two-Year Follow-Up (37)	Cohort	23/28	High
Determinants and indicators of successful ageing associated with mortality: a 4-year population-based study (46)	Cohort	24/28	High
Determinants of Successful Aging Using a Multidimensional Definition Among Chinese Elderly in Singapore (51)	Cohort	24/28	High
Association of Body Mass Index and Waist Circumference with Successful Aging (57)	Cohort	26/28	High
Physical Activity as a Determinant of Successful Aging over Ten Years (68)	Cohort	23/28	High
Social connectedness and predictors of successful ageing (42)	Cohort	23/28	High
Effects of Health-Related Behaviors and Changes on Successful Aging among Indonesian Older People (53)	Cohort	26/28	High
Association of Diet Quality with Longevity and Successful Aging in Israeli Adults 65 Years or Older (69)	Cohort	26/28	High
Profile and Determinants of Successful Ageing in the Ibadan Study of Aging (70)	Cohort	23/28	High
Associations of Pain and Sarcopenia with Successful Aging among Older People in China: Evidence from CHARLS (88)	Cohort	24/28	High
Age Identification in the Framework of Successful Aging. A Study of Older Finnish People (61)	Cohort	23/28	High
Association between successful aging transitions and depressive symptoms among older Korean adults: findings from the Korean longitudinal study of aging (2006–2018) (78)	Cohort	26/28	High
Transitioning from Successful Aging: A Life Course Approach (33)	Cohort	25/28	High
A Case-Controlled Study of Successful Aging in Older Adults with HIV (75)	Case Control	21/24	High
Factors Influencing the Successful Aging of Iranian Old Adult Women (11)	Qualitative	17/20	High
How Could Lay Perspectives on Successful Aging Complement Scientific Theory? Findings From a U.S. and a German Life-Span Sample (14)	Qualitative	17/20	High
Lay Definitions of Successful Ageing and Contributing Factors among Croatian Older Adults: A Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data (15)	Qualitative	18/20	High
Successful ageing: perceptions of adults aged between 70 and 101 years (16)	Qualitative	17/20	High
A thematic analysis of older adults' perspective of successful ageing (17)	Qualitative	19/20	High
Perceptions of Determinants of Successful Aging Among Older U.S. Veterans: Results from the National Health and Resilience in Veterans Study (18)	Qualitative	17/20	High
Successful ageing or resilient ageing: perceptions from elderly Chinese in Hawai'I (19)	Qualitative	15/20	High
Benefits and dynamics of learning gained through volunteering: A qualitative exploration guided by seniors' self-defined successful aging (28)	Qualitative	19/20	High
"If you got everything, it's good enough": Perspectives on successful aging in a Canadian Inuit community (32)	Qualitative	18/20	High
Successful aging among Chinese nearcentenarians and centenarians in Hong Kong: a multidimensional and interdisciplinary approach (12)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High

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Table 2. Cont

Study	Design	Total Score	Quality Level
Reliability and Validity of a Self-rated Analogue Scale for Global Measure of Successful Agin (13)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Association between car driving and successful ageing. A cross-sectional study on the "S.AGES" cohort (23)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Prevalence and correlates of successful aging in a population-based sample of older adults: the HUNT study (25)	Cross Sectional	13/16	High
Prevalence of and factors associated with successful aging in Brazilian older adults: Frailty in Brazilian older people Study (FIBRA RJ) (26)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
A Comparison of Self-Rated and Objectively Measured Successful Aging Constructs in an Urban Sample of African American Older Adults (27)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
The Older They Are, the Less Successful They Become? Findings from the Georgia Centenarian (30)	Cross Sectional	16-Dec	High
Successful Aging in Colombia: The Role of Disease (34)	Cross Sectional	14/16	High
Factors associated with successful aging in persons aged 65 to 75 years (35)	Cross Sectional	14/16	High
Prevalence and correlates of successful ageing: a comparative study between China and South Korea (36)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Association between internet use and successful aging of older Chinese women: a cross-sectional study (43)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Individual and environmental factors associated with successful aging among Korean older adults: Multilevel analysis of cross-sectional nationwide survey data (44)	Cross Sectional	14/16	High
Successful aging defined by health-related quality of life and its determinants in community-dwelling elders (47)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Association between Physical Fitness and Successful Aging in Taiwanese Older Adults (48)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Correlates of Self-Rated Successful Aging Among Community-Dwelling Older Adults (50)	Cross Sectional	16-Dec	High
Is There Successful Aging for Nonagenarians? The Vitality 90+ Study (52)	Cross Sectional	13/16	High
Gender Differences as Factors in Successful Ageing: A Focus on Socioeconomic Status (55)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Successful ageing in the oldest old: objectively and subjectively measured evidence from a population-based survey in Germany (56)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Successful ageing in Singapore: prevalence and correlates from a national survey of older adults (59)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Determinants of Successful Aging in a Cohort of Filipino Women (60)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Subthreshold Depression and Successful Aging in Older Women (62)	Cross Sectional	12/16	High
Successful aging at 100 years: the relevance of subjectivity and psychological resources (64)	Cross Sectional	11/16	Moderate
Prevalence of Successful Aging in the Elderly in Western Mexico (65)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Successful Aging: Illness and Social Connections (67)	Cross Sectional	11/16	Moderate
Comparison of personality traits and successful aging in older Taiwanese (29)	Cross Sectional	14/16	High
Successful Aging Among the Young-Old, Old-Old, and Oldest-Old Chinese (31)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Comparing successful aging, resilience, and holistic wellness as predictors of the good life (38)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Concordance and Discordance of Self-Rated and Researcher-Measured Successful Aging: Subtypes and Associated Factors (40)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
How “Successful” Do Older Europeans Age? Findings From SHARE (41)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Successful Aging from the Viewpoint of Older Adults: Development of a Brief Successful Aging Inventory (SAI) (45)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Successful Aging in Canada: Prevalence and Predictors from a Population-Based Sample of Older Adults (49)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
The Effects of Successful Aging in the Workplace on Technology Acceptance and Use Behaviour (54)	Cross Sectional	11/16	Moderate
successfull aging in the oldest old (63)	Cross Sectional	12/16	High
Tracing the origins of successful aging: The role of childhood conditions and social inequality in explaining later life health (66)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Successful Aging in Older Adults with Schizophrenia: Prevalence and Associated Factors (71)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Association between obesity status and successful aging among older people in China: evidence from CHARLS (72)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High

Determinants of Successful Aging

Among the nine articles that examined determinants of successful aging, two key determinants were consistently reported across all studies: health status, including physical and functional health (PF), and psychological well-being and cognition (PC). These studies further emphasized the significance of psychological well-being and the presence of supportive systems, such as policies, cultural factors, welfare facilities, family relationships, and social interactions. In addition, economic resources and financial security (EF) were identified as common determinants in five of the articles. The determinants of successful aging reported in these nine studies are summarized in Table 3.

Among the 67 articles that assessed successful aging using determinants from previous studies, four key determi-

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Table 2. Cont

Study	Design	Total Score	Quality Level
Successful Aging among Elders Living in the Mani Continental Region vs. Insular Areas of the Mediterranean: the MEDIS Study (73)	Cross Sectional	14/16	High
Successful Aging in the United States: Prevalence Estimates From a national Sample of Older Adults (74)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Successful aging in centenarians: myths and reality (76)	Cross Sectional	12/16	High
Obesity-related measures and successful ageing among community-dwelling older adults in India: a cross-sectional study (77)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Successful ageing and multi-dimensional poverty: the case of Peru (79)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Successful Aging: Criteria for Aging Well in the Workplace (81)	Cross Sectional	10/16	Moderate
Socio-demographic and Subjective Factors Related to a Psychosocial and Biomedical Model of Successful Ageing (82)	Cross Sectional	13/16	High
Multivariate decomposition of gender differentials in successful aging among older adults in India (83)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
The Role of Energy Balance in Successful Aging Among Elderly Individuals: The Multi-national MEDIS Study (84)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Successful aging, dietary habits and health status of elderly individuals: A k-dimensional approach within the multi-national MEDIS study (85)	Cross Sectional	16/16	High
Modeling Successful Aging Over Time in the Context of a Disaster (87)	Cross Sectional	15/16	High
Successful Aging and Well-Being: Self-Rated Compared with Rowe and Kahn (58)	Cross Sectional	14/16	High
Successful aging and lifestyle comparison of Greeks living in Greece and abroad: the Epi-demiological Mediterranean Islands Study (MEDIS (80)	Cross Sectional	12/16	High
Women's successful aging (89)	Cross Sectional	11/16	Moderate
Older Adults' Online Dating Profiles and Successful Aging (86)	Cross Sectional	14/16	High

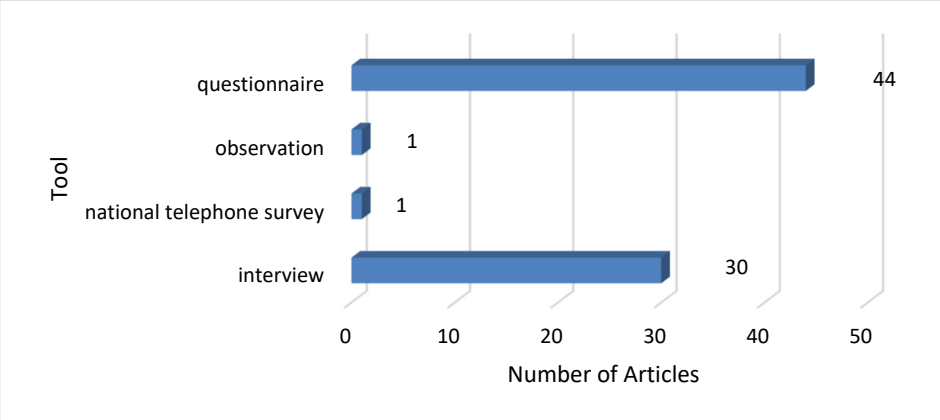


Figure 3. The Distribution of Data Collection Tools

nants were most frequently reported: good health status, absence of disability, functional ability, and high cognitive and physical performance. In addition, psychological and social components were commonly considered. The determinants of successful aging applied in these studies are presented in Table 4, while further details of the included articles are provided in Table 5.

Discussion

In this study, we conducted a systematic review to investigate the determinants of successful aging using a standardized search strategy. Through a structured screening process, we identified the determinants of successful aging reported in the included articles. In accordance with the PRISMA checklist, 76 articles met the eligibility criteria for inclusion. These studies were analyzed based on the determinants they identified directly or those adopted from previous research. The overall methodological quality of the included studies was moderate to high based on the JBJ checklist, which supports confidence in the synthesised findings.

We observed considerable variation in the determinants of aging among the studies. Given that successful aging encompasses a long life with good health and a better quality of life for the elderly, different countries and societies may have unique determinants based on their context and culture (10). Our systematic review revealed that, among the 9 studies focusing on identifying successful aging determinants, the availability of support systems and the state of health were frequently highlighted as key determinants (11-19). Studies indicate that support systems and health status are critical due to the characteristics of old age (20). Economic resources and financial security (EF) were identified in 5 studies (14, 16-19). Having a strong economic situation plays a significant role in providing the conditions for successful aging (21) while independence was noted in 4 studies (11, 15-17).

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Table 3. Frequency distribution of successful aging determinants defined in studies

Determinants	Frequency in article	Percentage
Availability of Support Systems	9	100%
State of Health	9	100%
Personal Capabilities	2	23%
Personality Characteristics	2	23%
Lifestyle	2	23%
Spirituality and Religiosity	1	9%
Economic resources and financial security (EF)	5	56%
Health-related quality of life	1	9%
Life satisfaction	1	9%
Growth/maturation	2	23%
Respect/status	2	23%
Education/knowledge	1	9%
Independence	4	45%
Meaning in Life	1	9%
Longevity	1	9%
Happiness/contentment	2	23%
Environment	2	23%

Table 4. Frequency distribution of successful aging determinants applied in studies

Determinants	Frequency in article	Percentage
Good health conditions, absence of disabilities, Functional Status	67	100%
Psychological components.	30	45%
Social component	26	39%
High cognitive and physical functioning	38	57%
Active engagement with life	32	48%
Having no financial worries	12	18%
Desiring a good death, not longevity	1	2%
Happiness.	4	6%
Affective Status	8	12%
Childhood experiences	1	2%
Adult attainments	1	2%
Current lifestyle behaviors	8	12%
Satisfaction on life	7	10%
self-independence	5	8%
Continued learning	4	6%
Being involved in work	3	5%
Taking on new activities	1	2%
Spiritual strength	1	2%
Personal security	2	3%
Continued focus and achievement of personal goals	3	5%
Optimism	1	2%
Resilience	1	2%

Other determinants, such as spirituality and religiosity, longevity (15), meaning in life, education/knowledge (17), and health-related quality of life, were also considered important. Despite the significant relevance of life satisfaction, only one article included it as a determinant of successful aging (22).While life satisfaction was noted as important in just one study (11).

Among the articles that used determinants from other studies, determinants such as good health conditions, absence of disabilities, and functional status were prevalent in 67 articles (23-89). Despite variations in the definition of successful aging, health, the absence of disease, and proper functioning are common themes across all definitions (90).

Active engagement with life was presented in 39 articles and was a key determinant in Rowe and Kahn's model. This model of successful aging includes avoidance of disease and disability, maintenance of high physical and cognitive function, and sustained engagement in social and productive activities (41). The majority of the reviewed studies utilized determinants from Rowe and Kahn's model. Other determinants, such as optimism, resilience, taking on new activities, spiritual strength, childhood experiences, adult attainments, and the desire for a good death, were considered determinants of successful aging in only one study each. Despite the significant importance of resilience and spiritual strength, these determinants have been measured in only one article. To better understand successful aging, more attention is needed on determinants addressing mental and psychological issues, in addition to the absence of disease (91).

Despite extensive research on determinants of successful aging, cultural factors play a significant role in determining these determinants (92). Although few studies have focused on aspects such as happiness, respect, or lifestyle, these factors could play a crucial role in successful aging. Notable commonalities exist among studies from different countries, including health status and the availability of support systems.

This review also faced some limitations. Although search strategies were employed across different databases (Web of Science, Scopus, and PubMed), not all determinants of successful aging in this field may have been identified through the literature review.

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Table 5. Summery of reviewed articles

#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
1	Factors Influencing the Successful Aging of Iranian Old Adult Women (11)	2015	16	Iran	Asia	• Availability of Support Systems • State of Health • Personal Capabilities • Personality Characteristics • Lifestyle	Face-to-face interviews	61-96	Define
2	Successful aging among Chinese near-centenarians and centenarians in Hong Kong: a multidimensional and interdisciplinary approach (12)	2016	120	China	Asia	• Physical and functional health • Psychological well-being and cognition • Social engagement and family support • Economic resources and financial security	Interview	95-108	Define
3	Reliability and Validity of a Self-rated Analogue Scale for Global Measure of Successful Aging (13)	2014	489	Singapore	Asia	• Physical Health and Function • Mental/Cognitive Well-being • Social Engagement • Psychological Well-being • Spirituality and Religiosity • Health-related quality of life • Life satisfaction	Questionnaire	65>	Define
4	How Could Lay Perspectives on Successful Aging Complement Scientific Theory? Findings From a U.S. and a German Life-Span Sample (14)	2015	306	Germanu usa	Europe North America	• Health • Social resources • Activities/Interests • Virtues/Attitudes/Beliefs • Well-being • Life management/ Coping • Financial Resources • Aging/Age as a topic • Independence • Meaning in Life • Growth/maturation • Respect/status • Education/knowledge • Microenvironment • Society/macroenvironment	Interviewe	15-96	Define
5	Lay Definitions of Successful Ageing and Contributing Factors among Croatian Older Adults: A Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data (15)	2022	95	Croatia	Europe	• Physical/ physiological • Cognitive and psychological • Engagement and activity • Social component • Existential and financial • Security and stability • Independence	Interviewe	65-95	Define
6	Successful aging: perceptions of adults aged between 70 and 101 years (16)	2003	60	Australia	Oceania	• Health • Activity • Personal growth • Happiness/contentment • Relationships • Independence • Appreciation/ value of life • Longevity	Interviewe	70-101	Define

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Table 5. Cont

#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
7	A thematic analysis of older adults' perspective of successful ageing (17)	2021	12	Chinese Malay Indian	Asia	• Being healthy • Family relationships • Financial independence • Social connectedness • Being positive	Interview	60-80	Define
8	Perceptions of Determinants of Successful Aging Among Older U.S. Veterans: Results from the National Health and Resilience in Veterans Study (18)	2015	2025	USA	North America	• Physical • Emotional • Cognitive	Interview	60-95	Define
9	Successful ageing or resilient ageing: perceptions from elderly Chinese in Hawai'I (19)	2018	13	Chinese	Asia	• The related concepts of happiness and joy • Social engagement • Good eating habits • The dependence and independence dilemma; • Natural environment	Interview	65-103	Define
10	Lifestyle predictors of successful aging: A 20year prospective HUNT study (24)	2019	4497	Norway	Europe	• Absence of disease • High cognitive • Physical functioning • Active engagement with life	Analysis second data	45-59	Apply
11	Prevalence and correlates of successful aging in a population-based sample of older adults: the HUNT study (25)	2017	5773	Norway	Europe	• Absence of disease • High cognitive • Physical functioning • Active engagement with life	Analysis second data	70-89	Apply
12	Prevalence of and factors associated with successful aging in Brazilian older adults: Frailty in Brazilian older people Study (FIBRA RJ) (26)	2018	845	Brazil	South America	• Good health conditions • Absence of disabilities • Good physical performance • Good cognitive performance	Face-to-face interviews	65>	Apply
13	A Comparison of Self-Rated and Objectively Measured Successful Aging Constructs in an Urban Sample of African American Older Adults (27)	2011	67	African	Africa	• Physical performance criteria IADL • Cognitive functioning criteria	Interview	59>	Apply
14	Benefits and dynamics of learning gained through volunteering: A qualitative exploration guided by seniors' self-defined successful aging (28)	2016	31	Southern Taiwan	Asia	• Being healthy • Having no financial worries • Maintaining connections with family and friends • Contributing to society • Desiring a good death, not longevity	In-depth interviews	60>	Apply

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Table 5. Cont

#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
15	Comparison of personality traits and successful aging in older Taiwanese (29)	2017	174	Taiwan	Asia	• Low probability of disease • High cognitive • Physical functional capacity • Active engagement with life	Questionnaires	65>	Apply
16	The older they are, the less successful they become. Findings from the Georgia Centenarian Study (30)	2012	306	USA	North America	• Low Probability of Disease • High Cognitive • Physical Capacity • Active Engagement with Life • Perceived Economic Status • Happiness	Interview	80>	Apply
17	Successful aging among the young-old, old-old, and oldest-old Chinese (31)	2002	1106	Chinese	Asia	• Functional Status • Affective Status • Cognitive Status • Productive Involvement	Interviewe	60<	Apply
18	If you got everything, it's good enough": Perspectives on successful aging in a Canadian Inuit community (32)	2001	38	Canada	North America	• Economic • Attitudinal • Respect from others in the community • Sociality	Interview	23-86	Apply
19	Transitioning From Successful Aging: A Life Course Approach (33)	2017	12108	USA	North America	• Social structural • Characteristics • Childhood experiences • Adult attainments • Current lifestyle behaviors	Analysis second data	14>	Apply
20	Successful Aging in Colombia: The Role of Disease (34)	2018	311	Colombia	South America	• High physical functioning • High cognitive functioning • High emotional functioning • High social functioning	Questionnaires	65-74	Apply
21	Factors associated with successful aging in persons aged 65 to 75 years (35)	2014	2160	French	Europe	• Physical health • Mental health • Social health	National telephone survey	65-74	Apply
22	Prevalence and correlates of successful ageing: a comparative study between China and South Korea (36)	2015	5409	China and South Korea	Asia	• Absence of major illness • Free of disability • No depressive symptoms • Active social/productive engagement • Satisfaction on life	Analysis second data	65>	Apply
23	The Challenge of Maintaining Successful Aging at 87 Years Old: The Octabaix Study Two-Year Follow-Up (37)	2012	146	Spain	Europe	• Functional status • Cognitive status • Nutritional status • Social risk	Interview	87	Apply
24	Comparing successful aging, resilience, and holistic wellness as predictors of the good life (38)	2018	200	USA	North America	• No major disease • No ADL restrictions • Actively engaged in their community • Having regular social engagement	Questionnaire	55>	Apply

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Table 5. Cont

#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
25	A Continuum of Successful Aging: The Impact of a Biomedical and Psychosocial Approach(39)	2016	15846	Canada	North America	• Low probability of disease • High cognitive and • Physical functional capacity • Sustained social engagement • Productive activities • Psychological criteria	Analysis of second data	60>	Apply
26	Concordance and Discordance of Self-Rated and Researcher-Measured Successful Aging: Subtypes and Associated Factors (40)	2017	1962	China	Asia	• Socioeconomic status (SES) • Health behaviors • Good health • Good financial security • Self-independence • Social engagement	Interview	65>	Apply
27	How "Successful" Do Older Europeans Age? Findings From SHARE (41)	2011	21493	Austria, Belgium, Denmark France, Greece, Germany , Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Czech Republic, Ireland, Poland, Israel Sweden, Switzerland	Europe	• No major disease • No activity of daily living (ADL) disability • Obtaining a median or higher score on tests of cognitive functioning • Being actively engaged	Questionnaire,	65>	Apply
28	Social connectedness and predictors of successful ageing (42)	2013	5512	Australia	Oceania	• Physical functioning • Major disease • Activities of daily living • Psychological scale	Questionnaire	70>	Apply
29	Association between internet use and successful aging of older Chinese women: a cross-sectional study (43)	2022	2713	Chinese	Asia	• No major diseases • No disability • High cognitive functioning • High physical functioning • Active engagement with life	Questionnaire	60>	Apply
30	Individual and environmental factors associated with successful aging among Korean older adults: Multilevel analysis of cross-sectional nationwide survey data (44)	2023	73942	Korean	Asia	• Absence of disability • High cognitive function • High mental function • Active social engagement • Psychologically well adapted in later life	Questionnaire	65>	Apply
31	Successful Aging from the Viewpoint of Older Adults: Development of a Brief Successful Aging Inventory (SAI) (45)	2017	550	Usa	North America	• Continued learning Being involved in work • Taking on new activities • Being able to think • Independence • Good health • Positive attitudes • Happiness • Spiritual strength • Good relationship with family/spouse/friends	Interviewe	65<	Apply

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Table 5. Cont

#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
32	Determinants and indicators of successful ageing associated with mortality: a 4-year population-based study (46)	2020	1284	Taiwan	Asia	• Physical activity • Life satisfaction and financial status • Health status • Cognitive function	Interviewe	50<	Apply
33	Successful aging defined by health-related quality of life and its determinants in community-dwelling elders (47)	2014	903	Taiwan	Asia	• Physical functioning (PF) • Role physical (RP) • General health (GH) • Vitality (VT) • Social functioning (SF) • Role emotional (RE) • Mental health (MH)	Questionnaire	65>	Apply
34	Association between Physical Fitness and Successful Aging in Taiwanese Older Adults (48)	2016	378	Taiwan	Asia	• Independence in performing • Free of cognitive impairment • Having satisfactory social functioning	Questionnaire	65>	Apply
35	Successful Aging in Canada: Prevalence and Predictors from a Population-Based Sample of Older Adults (49)	2013	8154	Canada	North America	• Absence of major diseases • High cognitive and physical functioning • Active engagement with life	Interview	65>	Apply
36	Correlates of Self-Rated Successful Aging Among Community-Dwelling Older Adults (50)	2006	205	Usa	North America	• Independent living • Positive adaptation • Active engagement with life • Mastery/growth • Life satisfaction/well-being • Freedom from disability • Absence of disease	Questionnaire	60>	Apply
37	Determinants of Successful Aging Using a Multidimensional Definition Among Chinese Elderly in Singapore (51)	2009	1281	Singapore	Asia	• Physical health • Well-functioning, • Cognitive functioning • Emotional well- being, • Social functioning, • Life engagemen	Interviewe	65<	Apply
38	Is There Successful Aging for Nonagenarians? The Vitality 90+ Study (52)	2012	1283	Finland	Europe	• Psychical • Social • Psychological	Questionnaire	90<	Apply
39	Effects of Health-Related Behaviors and Changes on Successful Aging among Indonesian Older People (53)	2022	1289	Indonesian	Asia	• Physical • Psychological • Social	Questionnaire	60>	Apply
40	The Effects of Successful Aging in the Workplace on Technology Acceptance and Use Behaviour (54)	2021	221	Turkey	Asia	• Adaptability and health • Positive relationships • Occupational growth • Personal security • Achievement of personal goals	Questionnaire	40<	Apply
41	Gender differences as factors in successful ageing: a focus on socioeconomic status (55)	2010	761	Korean	Asia	• Physical functioning • Social functioning	Interviewe	65-84	Apply
42	Association between car driving and successful ageing. A cross-sectional study on the "S.AGES" cohort (23)	2023	2098	France	Europe	• Physiological component • Psychological components	Observation	65 years and older	Apply

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Table 5. Cont

#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
43	Successful ageing in the oldest old: objectively and subjectively measured evidence from a population-based survey in Germany (56)	2021	1863	Germany	Europe	• Absence of disease • Physical functioning • Cognitive functioning • Interpersonal social engagement • Productive social engagement	Questionnaire	80-102	Apply
44	Association of Body Mass Index and Waist Circumference with Successful Aging (57)	2014	4869	Uk	Europe	• Absence of disease • Good physical and • Good Cognitive functioning • Absence of mental health problems	Questionnaire	60<	Apply
45	Successful Aging and Well-Being: Self-Rated Compared With Rowe and Kahn (58)	2002	867	Usa	North America	• Absence of disease • Absence of disability • Mental functioning • Active engagement with life.	Questionnaire	65-99	Apply
46	Successful ageing in Singapore: prevalence and correlates from a national survey of older adults (59)	2019	2565	Singapore	Asia	• No major disease • No activity of daily living (ADL) disability • Obtaining a median or higher score on tests of cognitive functioning • Being actively engaged	Questionnaire	60<	Apply
47	Determinants of Successful Aging in a Cohort of Filipino Women (60)	2019	1566	Philippines	Asia	• Physiological • Cognitive function • Mental health • Sociological	Questionnaire	46-79	Apply
48	Age identification in the framework of successful aging. a study of older finish people (61)	2003	1224	Finland	Europe	• Illness or injury causing problems in daily life • Health problems imposing limitations on hobbies • Self-rated functional capacity compared to age peers • Self-rated memory, • Learning ability, • Mental agility better than satisfactory	Questionnaire	65-84	Apply
49	Subthreshold Depression and Successful Aging in Older Women (62)	2010	1979	Usa	North America	• Physical functioning • Quality of life • Mental/emotional functioning • Social functioning • Attitude toward aging • Personal mastery • Self-efficacy • Optimism • Resilience • Cognition	Questionnaire	60-91	Apply
50	Successful Aging in the Oldest Old (63)	2001	699	Netherlands	Europe	• Physical Functioning • Social Functioning • Psychocognitive Functioning • Well-being	Interviewe	85	Apply
51	Successful aging at 100 years: the relevance of subjectivity and psychological resources (64)	2016	70	Portugal	EUROPE	• No major disease • No activity of daily living (ADL) disability • Obtaining a median or higher score on tests of cognitive functioning • Being actively engaged	Interview	100	Apply

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Table 5. Cont

#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
52	Prevalence of Successful Aging in the Elderly in Western Mexico (65)	2012	3116	Mexico	North America	• No major disease • No activity of daily living (ADL) disability • Obtaining a median or higher score on tests of cognitive functioning • Being actively engaged	Interview	60<	Apply
53	Tracing the origins of successful aging: The role of childhood conditions and social inequality in explaining later life health (66)	2012	22464	Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland	Europe	• No major disease • No activity of daily living (ADL) disability • Obtaining a median or higher score on tests of cognitive functioning • Being actively engaged	Questionnaire	50<	Apply
54	Successful Aging: Illness and Social Connections (67)	2018	50	Canada	North America	• Intrapsychic and functional performance • Coping mechanisms	Questionnaire	65-90	Apply
55	Physical Activity as a Determinant of Successful Aging over Ten Years (68)	2018	1584	Australia	Oceania	• Absence of diseases • The lack of disability • Being functionally independent	Questionnaire	60<	Apply
56	Association of Diet Quality With Longevity and Successful Aging in Israeli Adults 65 Years or Older (69)	2022	596	Israeli	Asia	• Preserved physical function • Preserved cognitive function • Favorable self-rated health • Mental well-being	Interviewe	65<	Apply
57	Profile and determinants of successful ageing in the ibadan study of aging (70)	2014	930	Nigeria.	Africa	• Absence of chronic health condition • Fully functional • Independence • Self-reported satisfaction with life	Questionnaire	65<	Apply
58	Successful Aging in Older Adults With Schizophrenia: Prevalence and Associated Factors (71)	2010	198	Usa	North America	• Total activities of daily living • Dementia rating scale • Quality of life index • Total number of reliable contacts • Self-health rating • Financial strain • Greater perceived control over one's life	Interview	55<	Apply
59	Association between obesity status and successful aging among older people in China: evidence from CHARLS (72)	2020	4019	China	Asia	• Absence of major disease • Freedom from disability • High cognitive function • No depressive symptoms • Active social engagement in life	Questionnaire	60<	Apply
60	Successful Aging among Elders Living in the Mani Continental Region vs. Insular Areas of the Mediterranean: the MEDIS Study (73)	2016	2693	Meditarane	Europe	• Education • Financial status • Physical activity • Depression • Participation in social • Activities with friends and family • Number of yearly excursions	Questionnaire	65<	Apply

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#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
61	Successful Aging in the United States: Prevalence Estimates From a National Sample of Older Adults (74)	2010		Usa	North America	• No major disease • No activity of daily living (ADL) disability • Obtaining a median or higher score on tests of cognitive functioning • Being actively engaged	Interview	65<	Apply
62	A Case-Controlled Study of Successful Aging in Older Adults with HIV (75)	2013	83	Usa	North America	• Physical functioning • Emotional functioning • Positive psychological traits	Questionnaire	50<	Apply
63	Successful aging in centenarians: myths and reality (76)	2005	602	Italy	Europe	• Absence of diseases and disabilities • Maintenance of high levels of physical and cognitive abilities • Preservation of the social • Productive activities	Questionnaire	100	Apply
64	Obesity-related measures and successful ageing among community-dwelling older adults in India: a cross-sectional study (77)	2022	31464	India	Asia	• Absence of chronic diseases • Freedom from disability • High cognitive ability • Free from depressive symptoms • Active social engagement in life	Questionnaire	60<	Apply
65	Association between successful aging transitions and depressive symptoms among older Korean adults: findings from the Korean longitudinal study of aging(2006–2018) (78)	2021	7856	Korean	Asia	• Absence of disease • Maintenance of high mental • Physical function • Continued engagement with life	Interview	45<	Apply
66	Successful ageing and multi-dimensional poverty: the case of Peru (79)	2016		Peru	South America	• Good health • Efficient daily living functioning • Efficient cognitive functioning • Good emotional health • High life satisfaction	Questionnaire	65-80	Apply
67	Women's successful aging (89)	2020	129	Turkey	Asia	• Healthy Lifestyle Habits (HLH) • Struggle Against Difficulties (SAD)	Interview	60<	Apply
68	Successful aging and lifestyle comparison of Greeks living in Greece and abroad: the Epidemiological Mediterranean Islands Study (MEDIS) (80)	2021	504	Greek	Europe	• Education • Financial status • Physical activity • Depression • Participation in social • Activities with friends and family • Number of yearly excursions	Questionnaire	65<	Apply
69	Successful Aging: Criteria for Aging Well in the Workplace (81)	2006	201	Usa	North America	• Adaptability and health • Positive relationships • Occupational growth • Personal security • Achievement of personal goals	Questionnaire	40<	Apply
70	Socio-demographic and Subjective Factors Related to a Psychosocial and Biomedical Model of Successful Ageing (82)	2021	61	Turkey	Asia	• High physical and cognitive functioning • No chronic disease • Being actively engaged with life • Psychological well-being	Questionnaire	50<	Apply

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#	Title	Year	Total sample	Country	Continent	Determinants	Data Collection	Participation age	Framework
71	Multivariate decomposition of gender differentials in successful aging among older adults in India (83)	2023	31464	India	Asia	• Absence of chronic diseases • Free from disability • High cognitive ability • Free from depressive symptoms • Active social engagement in life	Questionnaire	60<	Apply
72	The Role of Energy Balance in Successful Aging Among Elderly Individuals: The Multinational MEDIS Study (84)	2015	2663	Meditarane	Europe	• Education • Financial status • Physical activity • Depression • Participation in social • Activities with friends and family • Number of yearly excursions	Questionnaire	65-100	Apply
73	Successful aging, dietary habits and health status of elderly individuals: A k-dimensional approach within the multi-national MEDIS study (85)	2014	2663	Meditarane	Europe	• Education • Financial status • Physical activity • Depression • Participation in social • Activities with friends and family • Number of yearly excursions	Questionnaire	65-100	Apply
74	Older Adults' Online Dating Profiles and Successful Aging (86)	2016	320	All of wold		• Low probability of disease and disease-related disability • High physical and cognitive • Functional capacity • Active engagement with life	Questionnaire	60<	Apply
75	Modeling Successful Aging Over Time in the Context of a Disaster (87)	2017	5688	Usa	North America	• Functional ability • Pain • Chronic conditions	Questionnaire	60<	Apply
76	Associations of Pain and Sarcopenia with Successful Aging among Older People in China: Evidence from CHARLS (88)	2023	1822	China	Asia	• No major diseases • No disability • High cognitive functioning • No depressive symptoms • Active engagement with lif	Questionnaire	60<	Apply

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Researchers may have only reported high-performing determinants, suggesting that publication bias could exist in this review. Another limitation is the exclusion of non-English language studies.

Conclusion

This review aimed to examine the determinants of successful aging reported in the literature and to identify existing research gaps. The findings indicated that studies on successful aging determinants generally increased after 2001, peaked in 2015, and have since declined. Considering the accelerating trend of population aging, particularly in developing countries such as Iran, greater attention to the determinants of successful aging and further research in this field are essential.

Most studies have focused on analyzing determinants previously reported in the literature, while some have proposed new determinants of successful aging specific to their study populations. Successful aging is a multidimensional concept, and its determinants vary across cultural and societal contexts. This variation highlights the need for further research, particularly in countries such as Iran, to enhance understanding and provide context-specific strategies for promoting successful aging. In the articles that specifically defined indicators of successful aging, both access to a support system and overall health status emerged as consistently important factors, being identified as key indicators in all nine studies reviewed. This consistency across diverse studies underscores the universal significance of maintaining good health and having adequate social support for older adults to achieve successful aging. These findings align with prior research suggesting that physical well-being and social engagement are fundamental components of aging successfully, regardless of cultural or geographic context. Therefore, interventions aiming to promote successful aging should prioritize strategies that enhance both the health and social support networks of the elderly, ensuring that these crucial dimensions are addressed across different populations and settings.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Authors' Contributions

E.H. designed the study, conducted literature searches, screening, and drafted the manuscript. S.V., H.P., and E.H. jointly screened studies and extracted data. All authors contributed to thematic analysis, interpretation, scientific editing, and manuscript revision. All authors approved the final manuscript.

Ethical Considerations

The research was approved by the Iran University of Medical Sciences Ethics Committee (IR.IUMS.REC.1401.856). All methods were performed according to the relevant guidelines and regulations. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects.

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Data Availability

Data are available upon reasonable request.

AI Use Statement

The manuscript was written by the authors. AI tools were used to assist with grammar, language editing, and improving readability. All content, interpretations, and conclusions were developed, reviewed, and approved by the authors.

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