

Level of Psychological Problems and Coping Strategies of Elderly Persons Residing in Old Age Homes

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ABSTRACT

Ageing refers to a sequence of changes across a life span of an individual. Gerontology is one of the neglected fields in India. Since institutionalization is a growing problem, the elderly facing psychological problems & need to cope with the situation. The present study assessed the relationship between psychological problems and coping strategies of elderly persons residing in old age home. Descriptive research design was adopted. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the samples. A sample 100 was selected. The Investigator obtained permission from the concerned Authorities of the old age homes. Informed consent was taken from the subjects. The investigator used standardized scale to assess the psychological problems and the coping strategies of elderly persons. The data were analyzed by the means of descriptive and inferential statistics. The study results for the psychological problems of elderly persons reveals that majority 60% of them were had moderate level of psychological problems and 43% of the elderly persons were had at fair level of coping strategies. The present study concluded that there was negative correlation found between Psychological problems and Coping strategies. It means if their coping increases psychological problems decreases.

Keywords: Old age, Old Age Home, Ageing, Elderly, Psychological Problems, Coping Strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Old people are like old trees which will not give us fruit but shades which are their blessings. In India 7.5% population belong to age group above may projected to rise to 12.4% of population by the year 2026. There is sharp rise in age-specific death rate of 20/1000 persons in the age group of 60-64 years, 80 among 75- 79 years and 200 for persons aged more than 85 years. An old age home is usually the place, for old people who have no one to look after them or those who have been thrown out of their homes by their children. The place is of course like home where the inmates get all the facilities for a routine living, like food, clothing, and shelter. Parents play an important role in our lives. They brought up their children despite of having so many socio-economic difficulties. They fulfill our every demand & never complain for anything. In return it's our duty to give respect, love & care to them. This concept of separating the elders from the youngsters has been imported into India from the West. At least in India till now, the old people staying away from the home, from their children, or left to themselves is not considered to be a very happy situation. This is the reason why old age homes are increasing in India. The problems associated with old people to neglect from their children are lack of income, untreatable physical problem. So, the Old people will feel on helplessness, lonely, hopelessness. People favoring old age homes justify their decisions with several points. They say that the presence of old parents at home is too much trouble. There is no room for privacy. They

have constantly tended to them when they are sick. Bringing friends home becomes embarrassing. Going on a holiday becomes an impossible reality. So many problems just to have elderly parents around¹.

The elderly taking shelter in old age homes are either willingly or forced to live in such circumstances for varied reasons. With this the elderly may perceive to live in an environment which is either alien to their own and or adapt to the changing environment and circumstances imposed on them². No care taking person at home was the important reasons in OAHs³. Srivastava AL (2003) assessed the status and coping level of elderly persons residing in old age home. It was found that 36% are living alone and 20% are having coping abilities and 10% are living remotely related or unrelated people. Nine percentages of them were couples, 24% of them had left their family because of accommodation problem, 14% had no shelters and their coping abilities are very poor below 15%. Majorities 61% are fully satisfied with the old age home facilities and 31% are partially satisfied 18% are dissatisfied⁴.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Aim

The present study aimed to assess the psychological problems and coping strategies among elderly residing in old age home, Chennai.

Methods

Descriptive Research design with survey approach was adopted. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables of elderly. N=100

Demographic variables	No. of Elderly persons	Percentage	
Age	60 -64 yrs	36	36.0%
	65 -69 yrs	30	30.0%
	70 -74 yrs	20	20.0%
	> 75 yrs	14	14.0%
Gender	Male	55	55.0%
	Female	45	45.0%
Marital status	Married	80	80.0%
	Unmarried	5	5.0%
	Divorced	3	3.0%
	Widowed	12	12.0%
Type of family	Nuclear family	86	86.0%
	Joint family	14	14.0%
Number of children	No children	5	5.0%
	one children	15	15.0%
	Two children	36	36.0%
	> Two children	44	44.0%
Income status	Pension	25	25.0%
	Support from relatives and family	51	51.0%
	Rent from property	6	6.0%
	No resources of income	18	18.0%
Type of support	Son/Daughter	50	50.0%
	Relatives	33	33.0%
	Old age home	17	17.0%

Table 2: Level of Psychological Problems of elderly persons residing in the old age home. N=100

Level of Psychological Problems	No. of elderly people	Percentage
Very severe	0	0.0%
Sever	31	31.0%
Moderate	60	60.0%
Mild	9	9.0%
Total	100	100.0%

Table 3: Level of Coping Strategies of elderly persons residing in the old age home. N=100

Level of Coping Strategies	No. of elderly people	Percentage
Very Poor	0	0.0%
Poor	28	28.0%
Fair	43	43.0%
Good	29	29.0%
Total	100	100.0%

Table 4: correlation between psychological problems and coping strategies adopted by the elderly people. N=100

Score	Mean	Standard deviation	Karl pearson correlation coefficient
Psychological problems score	65.21	12.21	r=- 0.44

select the samples. Sample of 100 old age people who met the inclusion criteria of age over 60, older adults who can

able to hear, comprehend, and respond correctly were selected as study participants. An older adult who was cognitively impaired were excluded from this study. Participant's demographic profiles were assessed.

Material

A standardized scale was used to assess the psychological problems and its coping strategies of study participants. Section A consists of questions to elicit psychological problems and section B consist of questions to assess the coping strategies of elderly persons. Scoring key were given to assess the level of psychological problems and if very poor the score was 30, if 31-60 it indicate mild problem, 61-90 it shows moderate problem, if severe the score was 91-120. The Score were given to assess the level of coping strategies of elderly. The score below 20 it indicate the coping level will be very poor and the level 21-40 it indicate poor coping , the score 41-60 the coping level will be fair and the score 61-80 it shows the coping level will be good.

Ethical consideration

The Investigator was obtained permission from the concerned Authorities of the old age homes. Informed consent was taken from the subjects and they were assured of confidentiality.

Data collection methods and analysis

A Total of 100 samples were selected. The investigator administered structured interview schedule to assess the psychological problems and the coping strategies adopted by the elderly. The data was analyzed by the means of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Frequency and percentage distribution to describe the demographic variables and level of psychological problems and coping strategies of elderly. Karl Pearson

Table 5: Association between psychological problems and demographic Variables of elderly persons residing in the old age home. N = 100

Demographic variables		Level of Psychological problems						Total	Chi square test	
		Mild		Moderate		Severe				
		n	%	n	%	n	%			
Age	60 -64 yrs	10	27.8%	25	69.4%	1	2.8%	36	$\chi^2=5.04$ p=0.54 DF=6 not significant	
	65 -69 yrs	10	33.3%	15	50.0%	5	16.7%	30		
	70 -74 yrs	7	35.0%	11	55.0%	2	10.0%	20		
	> 75 yrs	4	28.6%	9	64.3%	1	7.1%	14		
Gender	Male	17	30.9%	34	61.8%	4	7.3%	55	$\chi^2=0.47$ p=0.78 DF=2 not significant	
	Female	14	31.1%	26	57.8%	5	11.1%	45		
Marital status	Married	24	30.0%	51	63.8%	5	6.3%	80	$\chi^2=21.80$ p=0.01 DF=6 Significant	
	Unmarried	1	20.0%	2	40.0%	2	40.0%	5		
	Divorced	0	66.7%	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	3		
	Widowed	6	50.0%	6	50.0%	0	0.0%	12		
Type of family	Nuclear family	26	30.2%	52	60.5%	8	9.3%	86	$\chi^2=0.20$ p=0.90 DF=2 not significant	
	Joint family	5	35.7%	8	57.1%	1	7.1%	14		
Number of children	No children	1	20.0%	4	80.0%			5	$\chi^2=3.57$ p=0.73 DF=6 not significant	
	one children	4	26.7%	9	60.0%	2	13.3%	15		
	Two children	11	30.6%	20	55.6%	5	13.9%	36		
	> Two children	15	34.1%	27	61.4%	2	4.5%	44		
Income status	Pension	9	28.0%	16	64.0%	0	0.0%	25	$\chi^2=16.74$ p=0.01 DF=6 Significant	
	Support from relatives and family	16	31.4%	32	60.8%	3	7.8%	51		
	Rent from property	2	33.3%	4	66.7%	0	0.0%	6		
	No resources of income	4	33.3%	8	50.0%	6	16.7%	18		
Type of support	Son/Daughter	16	32.0%	29	58.0%	5	10.0%	50	$\chi^2=1.20$ p=0.18 DF=4 not significant	
	Relatives	9	27.3%	22	66.7%	2	6.1%	33		
	Old age home	6	35.3%	9	52.9%	2	11.8%	17		

correlation coefficient test was used to find the correlation between Psychological problems and Coping strategies adopted by the elderly people. Chi-square test was used to associate psychological problems and coping strategies among elderly persons with their demographical variables.

RESULTS

Analysis and interpretation of data of this study was done using descriptive and inferential statistics. Table 1 reveals that majority 36.0% of them were in the age group of 60-64 years. Regarding the gender majority 55% of them were males. Eighty percentages of them were married people resided in the old age home. Considering the type of family 86.0 % of them were lived in nuclear family. Regarding the number of children majority 44.0% of them had > two children. Considering the income status majority 51.0% got supported from their relatives and family. Regarding the type of support majority 50.0% of them were supported by their son/ daughter. Table 2 reveals that majority 60% of the elderly had moderate level of psychological problems. Table 3 shows that majority 43% of the elderly were had fair level of coping strategies towards

psychological problems. Table 4 shows that there was negative correlation between Psychological problems score and Coping score. It means if their coping increases psychological problems decreases. Table 5 shows that there was significant association between psychological problems and demographic variables of marital status and income status of elderly persons residing in the old age home. It was confirmed by using chi square test p value 0.01. Table 6 reveals that there was significant association between the level of coping strategies and the demographic variables of age and those who had more than two children.

DISCUSSION

The present study assessed the psychological problems and its coping strategies of elderly persons residing in old age home. The study results reveal that majority 60% of them were had moderate level of psychological problems like stress, depression and anxious. Majority (43%) of the elderly persons were had at fair level of coping strategies by interacting with comates, reading books, participating in social gatherings, ventilating the feelings with someone were they get disturbed. These findings were supported

Table 6: Association between Level of coping strategies and demographic variables.

N = 100

Demographic variables		Level of coping score						Total	Chi square test
		Poor		Fair		Good			
		n	%	n	%	n	%		
Age	60 -64 yrs	5	13.8%	25	69.4%	6	16.7%	36	$\chi^2=12.70$ p=0.05 DF=6 Significant
	65 -69 yrs	10	33.3%	17	56.7%	3	10.0%		
	70 -74 yrs	9	45.0%	11	55.0%	0	0.0%		
	> 75 yrs	7	50.0%	7	50.0%	0	0.0%		
Gender	Male	17	30.9%	34	61.8%	4	7.3%	55	$\chi^2=1.78$ p=0.48 DF=2 not significant
	Female	14	31.1%	26	57.8%	5	11.1%		
Marital status	Married	24	30.0%	51	63.8%	5	6.3%	80	$\chi^2=6.39$ p=0.38 DF=6 Not significant
	Unmarried	1	20.0%	2	40.0%	2	40.0%		
	Divorced	0	66.7%	1	33.3%	2	66.7%		
	Widowed	6	50.0%	6	50.0%	0	0.0%		
Type of family	Nuclear family	26	30.2%	52	60.5%	8	9.3%	86	$\chi^2=0.66$ p=0.71 DF=2 not significant
	Joint family	5	35.7%	8	57.1%	1	7.1%		
Number of children	No children	4	80.0%	1	20.0%	0	0.0%	5	$\chi^2=13.82$ p=0.05 DF=6 Significant
	one children	7	46.7%	8	53.3%	0	0.0%		
	Two children	13	36.1%	20	63.9%	3	8.3%		
	> Two children	7	15.9%	31	70.5%	6	13.6%		
Income status	Pension	9	28.0%	16	64.0%	0	0.0%	25	$\chi^2=5.12$ p=0.58 DF=6 Not significant
	Support from relatives and family	16	31.4%	32	60.8%	3	7.8%		
	Rent from property	2	33.3%	4	66.7%	0	0.0%		
	No resources of income	4	33.3%	8	50.0%	6	16.7%		
Type of support	Son/Daughter	16	32.0%	29	58.0%	5	10.0%	50	$\chi^2=0.90$ p=0.92 DF=4 not significant
	Relatives	9	27.3%	22	66.7%	2	6.1%		
	Old age home	6	35.3%	9	52.9%	2	11.8%		

with the similar study has been conducted by Maddepalli Usha Rani et al., (2016) results shows that 3(3%) have mild stress, 86(86%) have moderate stress and 11(11%) have severe stress. They concluded that Elderly people residing at old age home experience moderate to severe level of stress⁵.

Further study conducted by Naveen Kumar Sharma (2014) results showed that level of physiological problems among the 50 old age people are, 78% have mild physiological problems, 20% have moderate physiological problems and 2% have severe physiological problems; Level of psychological problems are, 22% have mild psychological problems, 54% have moderate psychological problems and 24% have severe psychological problems; Level of psycho-social problems are, 26% have mild psycho-social problems, 66% have moderate psycho-social problems and 08% have severe psycho-social problems and Level of overall geriatric problems are, 68% have mild geriatric problems and 32% have moderate geriatric problems and no severe cases has been noticed. Their study results revealed that the old age people are having mild

physiological, moderate psychological, moderate psycho-social problems and over all mild geriatric problems⁶.

Another study conducted by Geetha Mani et al., (2014) revealed that nearly 18% of the participants had high stress scores and 60% had moderate stress scores. Gender, co-living status with spouse was found to be significantly associated with stress scores. The perceived stress was high among inmates of old age homes. There is a need for organized family and social support to improve the physical and psychological health of elderly. Exploratory research studies are necessary to identify the problems among elderly, especially those in old age homes⁷.

Sasmita Panigrahi, Bijayalaskhmi Dash (2015) showed that the overall stress mean score (60.6±7.28) which is 60.6% of total score, shows the moderate stress of senior citizen and the overall coping strategy mean score (68.93±5.91) which is 68.93% of total score shows that there is moderate level of coping among senior citizen⁸.

CONCLUSION

The present study assessed the psychological problems and coping strategies among elderly residing in selected old

age homes, Alandur Chennai. Coping strategies was found to be effective in reducing level of psychological problems. Hence there is significant association between the psychological problems and coping strategies. The present study findings also reveal that there was negative correlation between Psychological problems score and Coping score. It means if their coping increases psychological problems decreases. This shows that the imperative need to understand the purpose of coping scale in reducing psychological problems among elderly in old age home and it will enhances an overall sense of well being as well improvement in the quality of life.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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