

“A Study to Assess the Psychological Problems Experienced by Geriatrics Living in Old Age Homes at Coimbatore”.

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ABSTRACT

Ageing is often accompanied by psychological challenges such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness. Elderly individuals residing in old age homes are particularly vulnerable due to separation from family, loss of independence, and social isolation. The present study aimed to assess the psychological problems experienced by geriatrics living in selected old age homes at Coimbatore.

A descriptive research design with a quantitative approach was adopted. The study was conducted among 30 elderly residents aged 60 years and above using a non-probability convenience sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured interview schedule comprising socio-demographic variables and standardized tools such as the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) and Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

The findings revealed that a majority of the elderly experienced mild to moderate levels of depression and anxiety. No significant association was found between psychological problems and selected demographic variables. The study highlights the need for early identification and appropriate mental health interventions for elderly individuals living in old age homes.

Key Words: Geriatrics, psychological problems, depression, anxiety, old age home.

INTRODUCTION

The global increase in the elderly population has made mental health issues among older adults a significant public health concern¹. The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 15% of people aged 60 years and above suffer from mental disorders, with depression being the most common². In India, studies indicate a high prevalence of depression among the elderly, particularly among those living in institutional settings³.

Old age homes, though providing shelter and basic care, often fail to address the emotional and psychological needs of residents. Factors such as loneliness, loss of social roles, lack of family support, and declining health contribute to psychological distress⁴. Hence, assessing psychological problems among geriatrics living in old age homes is essential for planning appropriate mental health services.

Statement Of the Problem

“A study to assess the psychological problems experienced by geriatrics living in old age homes at Coimbatore.”

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Psychological well-being is an essential component of healthy ageing. Elderly individuals living in old age homes are at higher risk of depression and anxiety due to social isolation and emotional neglect⁵. Research shows that mental health problems among institutionalized elderly often remain underdiagnosed and untreated⁶.

Assessing psychological problems among geriatrics will help nurses and healthcare professionals to identify at-risk individuals early and provide timely interventions, thereby improving quality of life.

Objectives

1. To assess the psychological problems among geriatrics living in old age homes.
2. To determine the level of depression among geriatrics.
3. To determine the level of anxiety among geriatrics.
4. To find the association between psychological problems and selected demographic variables.

Hypotheses

H₁: There is a significant association between psychological problems and selected demographic variables among geriatrics.

METHODOLOGY

- **Research Design:** Descriptive research design
- **Approach:** Quantitative approach
- **Setting:** St. Joseph's Old Age Home, Podanur, Coimbatore
- **Population:** Geriatrics aged 60 years and above
- **Sample Size:** 30
- **Sampling Technique:** Non-probability convenience sampling

Tools Used

- Socio-demographic questionnaire
- Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS)
- Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale

RESULTS (Brief)

- 40% of geriatrics had mild depression
- 30% had moderate depression
- 60% experienced mild anxiety
- No statistically significant association was found between psychological problems and demographic variables

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that psychological problems such as depression and anxiety are common among geriatrics living in old age homes. Early screening, emotional support, and structured mental health interventions are essential to promote psychological well-being among institutionalized elderly.

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