## Original Research Paper

## Nursing

# EFFECTIVENESS OF GUIDED IMAGERY IN REDUCING DEPRESSION AMONG ELDERLY IN SELECTED OLD AGE HOMES.

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## KEYWORDS :

"Years may wrinkle the skin,but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul"

-Samuel Ullman

The ageing process increases isolation from family ties, disturb personal and social relationship and often leads to psychological problems. The degree of adaptation to the fact of ageing is crucial to ones happiness. Failure to adapt can result in depression. Depression is a complex syndrome that manifests in a variety of ways by the people showing that they are unhappy and disappointed.

The number of depression cases in elderly people is growing speedily and the time now desperately demands to get any treatment to help alleviate depression in the elderly people and save them. It was evidently felt need to identify the depressive feelings of the elderly clients so that future interventions could be planned or recommended to improve the quality of life of the elderly population.

The number of depression cases in elderly people is growing speedily and the time now desperately demands to get any treatment to help alleviate depression in the elderly people and save them.More than 2 million people aged 65 and old suffer from depression including 50% of those live in nursing home.

### Need for the study
Depression is not only disabling;there is increasing evidence that depression is a fatal illness in older adults.Depression is the leading risk factor for suicide.The suicide rate for persons 65years and older is greater than any other age group.Older adults account for 18% of all suicides,while they only make up 13% of the population in the United States (National Institute of Mental Health, 1999).The highest frequency is found among white males 65years and older at 62/100,000.It was evidently felt, the need to identify the depressive feelings of the elderly clients so that future interventions could be planned or recommended to improve the quality of life of the elderly population.

It was found that the elderly in old age homes face depression from various situations which are different from those that are faced by adults.They might have lost a spouse and might be feeling lonely and left alone.They might have retired and thus, might be undergoing a change, both in their living and financial situations.Guided Imagery is at the centre of relaxation techniques designed to release brain chemicals that act as our body's natural brain tranquilizers, lowering blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety,depressive feelings and stress levels. Hence the investigator recognized the need for a detailed study on the effect of guided imagery on level of depression among the elderly in old age homes.More over it would enrich the nursing literature.

### Statement of the problem
A study to assess the effectiveness of guided imagery in reducing depression among elderly in selected old age homes in Trivandrum district.

### Objectives of the study
1. To assess the level of depression among elderly in old age homes.
2. To assess the effectiveness of guided imagery in reducing depression.
3. To find out the association between level of depression and selected demographic variables.

### Operational definitions
**Effectiveness:-** In this study, effectiveness refers to the extent to which the guided imagery will help to achieve a reduction in level of depression in the elderly as measured by Modified Yesavage Geriatric Depression Scale.

**Guided imagery:-**In this study,guided imagery refers to guiding the elderly persons through a sequence of pleasant experiences allowing to use their own imagination.

**Depression:-** In this study depression refers to feelings of hopelessness and inadequacy, typically accompanied by lack of energy and interest in life as measured by Modified Yesavage Geriatric Depression Scale.

**Elderly:-** In this study the elderly refers to a person whose age is more than 60 and who is living in selected old age homes.

**Old age home:-** In this study old age home refers to an institution which gives care, shelter and food for the elderly which is situated in Trivandrum.

### Hypotheses
The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.
$H_1$: There is significant difference in the mean depression score of elderly in experimental and control group.
$H_2$: There is significant association between level of depression and selected demographic variablesm.

### METHODOLOGY
**Research approach**
Experimental approach

### Research design
Quasi experimental – pre- test and post- test, control group design
Experimental group    O1    X    O2
Control group        O1        O2
O1 = Pre-test.
X = Intervention.
O2 = Post-test.

### Variables
**Dependent Variable**
Depression

**Independent Variable**
Guided Imagery.

### Population
Population comprised of all elderly men and women with depression between the ages of 60-75years residing in old age

homes at Trivandrum.

## Sample and sampling technique
Purposive sampling and sample size consists of 40subjects,20 from experimental group and 20 from control group.Sample was selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

## Tool/Instruments
The data collection instruments used in the present study were:
Part I Demographic proforma
Part II Modified Yesavage Geriatric Depression Scale
Part III Guided imagery

## The scoring scale
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 0-9 | - | Normal |
| 10-16 | - | Mild Depression |
| 17-23 | - | Moderate Depression |
| 24-30 | - | Severe Depression |

## Data collection procedure
A prior written permission was obtained.The investigator assured confidentiality of their responses and consent was obtained from each subject and they were made comfortable and collected demographic profile by demographic proforma questionnaire and depression score by Modified Yesavage Geriatric depression scale. In phase 1,all elderly were assessed for depression using Modified Yesavage Geriatric Depression Scale. In phase 2 elderly with mild to moderate depression were enrolled in the study.On the second day, based on their depression level, investigator selected 20 subjects with mild to moderate depression each from experimental and control group by purposive sampling technique.The participants were divided into 4 groups(5 members in each group) and the investigator administered guided imagery for a period of 15- 20 minutes for 3 weeks (9 times) to the participants of the experimental group. The participants were co-operative and showed interest in practicing guided imagery.On 4th,week a post- test was conducted to both groups by using the same Modified Yesavage Geriatric Depression Scale.

## Distribution of subjects based on demographic variables
Demographic variables  Experimental group  Control group

| Education | F | % | F | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Illiterate | 5 | 25.0 | 1 | 5.0 |
| Primary | 12 | 60.0 | 4 | 20.0 |
| Secondary | 2 | 10.0 | 8 | 40.0 |
| Graduate | 1 | 5.0 | 6 | 30.0 |
| Postgraduate | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5.0 |
| Number of children | | | | |
| ≤2 | 12 | 60.0 | 13 | 65.0 |
| >2 | 8 | 40.0 | 7 | 35.0 |

## Type of family
| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nuclear | 12 | 60.0 | 14 | 70.0 |
| Others | 8 | 40.0 | 6 | 30.0 |

## Use of adaptive devices
| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Using | 10 | 50.0 | 13 | 65.0 |
| Not using | 10 | 50.0 | 7 | 35 |

## Duration of stay
| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <1 | 4 | 20.0 | 2 | 10.0 |
| 1-2 | 6 | 30.0 | 2 | 10.0 |
| 3-4 | 3 | 15.0 | 3 | 15.0 |
| >4 | 7 | 35.0 | 13 | 65.0 |

## Section 2: Level of depression among elderly

## Frequency distribution and percentage level of elderly based on level of depression

| Depression | Experimental | | | | Control | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Pre | | Post | | Pre | | Post | |
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| Mild | 14 | 70.0 | 20 | 100.0 | 14 | 70.0 | 14 | 70.0 |
| Moderate | 6 | 30.0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 30.0 | 6 | 30.0 |

## Section 3: Effectiveness of guided imagery on depression among elderly.
The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.
$H_1$: There is significant difference in the mean depression score of elderly in experimental and control group.
H2: There is significant association between levels of depression and selected demographic variables.

## Difference in the mean level of depression of elderly before and after guided imagery.

| Group | Mean | SD | df | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental | 4.65 | 1.14 | 38 | 17.996*** | .001 |
| Control group | 30 | .47 | | | |

***Significant at 0.001 level

From the above table among the experimental group average reduction in depression was $4.65 \pm 1.14$, among the control group average reduction was $30 \pm 0.47$. Experimental group shows better improvement in depression after therapy than the controls. There is significant difference in the mean depression score of elderly before and after guided imagery at 0.001 level of significance. Hence, research hypothesis was accepted..The results showed that guided imagery was found to be effective.

## Nursing Implications
The findings of the study have implications in the field of nursing education, nursing practice, nursing administration and nursing research.

## Nursing Education
Elderly clients residing in institution are at greater risk for developing depression.The curriculum must give importance for early detection and prevention of depression among elderly and should incorporate non pharmacological interventions like guided imagery.Curriculum must also emphasize on Community Mental Health programme.During this programme nurses can be instrumental in initiating policy, education and implementation of cost effective non pharmacological interventions addressing the mental health needs of older clients.Inservice education can be conducted to improve knowledge of health professionals regarding non pharmacological interventions for geriatric depression.

## Nursing Practice
Guided imagery was an effective non pharmacological intervention for reducing geriatric depression.The investigator as a mental health nurse felt that nurses are ideally placed to implement proactive strategies to prevent depression,to promote early detection of symptoms and to ensure access to effective treatment in older people.Mental health nurse have a key role in providing the appropriate psychological, spiritual, social and physical support that can lead to improvement in quality of life for the older person.

Guided imagery may be easily integrated into bedside nursing as well as in wide range of possible clinical settings that include home care, staff development and nursing management for nurses in advanced practice environments such as nurse practitioners,nurse anesthetists and clinical nurse specialists in private practice.

## Nursing Administration

Nursing administrators should be made aware of the importance of alternative and complementary therapies.Nurse admininistrator should implement outreach programmes to make the public aware about influence of institutionalistion in elderly.Inservice education can be conducted for nurses regarding cost-effective,non pharmacological treatment for depression.There should be adequate administrative support to conduct Geriatric Mental Health Programme periodically.The findings of the present study will help the nurse administrators to utilize these findings to equip the nurses working in hospitals by making them well informed about various aspect of depression management.

### Nursing Research

Although much research has been done on the effect of relaxation techniques in nursing, the effectiveness of guided imagery on depression among the elderly is least explored area.On the basis of this study,the nurse researcher can design further research to develop alternative therapies on reducing depression.

Old age is an irreversible biological phenomenon that eventually terminates with the end of the life of a human being. It is a gift that no one can refuse to take but the various changes that occur in our society sometimes make us scared of this stage as everyone of us faces one day.

### Limitations

The limitations of the present study are
1. The influence of extraneous variables during the period between pretest and posttest in control group cannot be explored.
2. As the study was conducted in an institutional set up generalization of findings for community dwelling population of the aged remain restricted.

### Recommendations

On the basis of present study, the following recommendations are formed for future study.
1. The same study can be conducted on a larger sample over a longer period of time which might yield more reliable results.
2. Similar study can be conducted in different settings.
3. A comparative study may be done to assess the effectiveness of Guided imagery on the elderly staying with their family members and old age home.
4. Effectiveness of other relaxation therapies in reduction of depression can be studied.
5. Guided Imagery can be played and organized in a way to encourage the elderly to practice in day today life.

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