



## Effectiveness of planned activities on Quality of Life (QOL) of elderly Living in Old Age Home

### Nursing

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### ABSTRACT

The Indian aged population is currently the second largest in the world. Several studies reported that a large number of old men and women badly need health care, social recognition and counseling services to cope up with stress for overcoming death anxiety, sense of isolation, feeling of disability and dependency, low social esteem and lethargic feelings. This study is conducted to determine the effectiveness of planned activities on Quality of Life (QOL) of elderly, residents of an old age home and to assess their opinion about planned activities. Planned activities, which were conducted for a period of 30 days, include the recreational, play, and communication activities based on the knowledge, skills and interest of the participants. Thirty five inmates of a selected Old Age Home of Dehradun were included in the study. One group pretest posttest design was adopted and a standardized WHOQOL-BREF questionnaire was used to assess the QOL of study participants before the implementation of planned activities and 30 days after implementation.

The QOL score on all four domains (physical, psychological, social and environmental) showed significant increase after implementation of planned activities (Physical QOL from  $52.6 \pm 19.2$  to  $62.9 \pm 10.9$ , psychological QOL from  $57.2 \pm 17.6$  to  $62.6 \pm 11.8$ , social QOL from  $46.5 \pm 17.5$  to  $61.6 \pm 8.7$  and environmental QOL from  $65.9 \pm 12.7$  to  $69.3 \pm 9.4$ ).

It was observed that as the age was negatively correlated to physical health of elderly. Educational status had positive influence on their QOL score. The environmental QOL of married elderly people was significantly higher than those whose were widow, widower and unmarried. Most of the participants (80%) felt that the planned activities were overall useful for them, 88.6% felt pleasure and enjoyed during those activities, 71.4% felt that it helped them ventilate their feeling and 83% of the participants wanted to continue those activities regularly.

The findings confirm that planned activities were effective for the improvement of QOL of old age home residents. Planned activities need to be introduced in their daily schedule to improve their QOL though further studies can be done on larger sample and multiple settings.

### KEYWORDS:

Planned activities; Quality of life (QOL); Elderly; Old age home.

### Introduction

Aging is a natural process and an inevitable one. Old age is a crucial phase where the physiological, psychological and socio-cultural changes in elderly affect their living pattern and their health status. In India the elderly constitute about 8.6% of the total population<sup>1</sup> and by 2050 the number is likely to increase to 20%<sup>2</sup>. According to National sample survey Organization, 36.7% of 70 million elderly want to shift to old age homes because they can't manage alone<sup>3</sup>. The process of ageing itself tends to create psychological and social problems for the individual and society. In addition, the changing life styles of the young are also created stress and tension among the elderly. Many of the elderly in our country experience increasing isolation from family types, personal and social relationships.

Many studies were conducted to evaluate whether implementation of some activities such as play and physical activities improve the QOL and subjective wellbeing of elderly. This study is planned to study the effectiveness of planned activities which included combination of play, communication and recreational activities with regular interval under guidance of an expert on QOL of elderly living in a selected old age home. The outcome may help in improving the QOL of elderly efficiently.

Borg C, Hallberg IR, and Blomqvist K<sup>4</sup> studied level of life satisfaction among randomly selected 522 elderly persons and reported low life satisfaction among women, as well as those living in special accommodations such as old age home.

### Objectives

The objectives of the study are to determine the effectiveness of planned activities on QOL of elderly residents of an old age home and to assess the opinion of old age home residents about the planned activities.

### Methods and Materials

Quasi-experimental design with one-group pretest-posttest method was used. Thirty five inmates of 'Geeta Kuteer Tapovan', an old age home in Haridwar, were selected as study participants. Permission was obtained from the old age home authority and informed consent

was obtained from the participants of the study after explaining the purpose and process of the study. All the participants living in the old age home were included in the study. Physically handicapped individuals were excluded since they were not able to participate in physical and recreational activities.

### Tools and technique:

A standardized questionnaire WHOQOL-BREF was used to assess the QOL of elderly. WHOQOL-BREF is an abbreviated 26 item version of the standardized WHOQOL-100 and its reliability was assessed with 20 elderly through structured interview and scoring was done through standard criteria of evaluation. The reliability coefficient of the structured interview schedule was  $r=0.99$ . An opinionnaire was developed by the researcher which contains 15 questions regarding the planned activities. The content validity was done through seven experts from the field of nursing, psychiatry, neurology, geriatric medicine, and community medicine.

### Planned activities

Planned activities were implemented for 30 days without any gap or discontinuation. The activities were planned in a schematic order by preparing the schematic chart. According to the prepared chart recreational activities were organized on Monday and Thursday, play activities were implemented on Tuesday and Friday and communication activities were executed on Wednesday and Saturday. These activities were selected based on institution's norms and policies and on the basis of pre-assessment of participants' interest. Recreational activities were selected to promote their interest in life, and develop their decision making ability; the basic principle of recreational activities were to provide some mental exercises.

Play activities were selected to promote their sleep, improve their physical strength and provide them positive energy for their daily living. Communicational activities were selected to increase their socialization with their inmates, help them to develop interpersonal relationship and make new friends. These activities were provided for two hours daily at morning time and every participant had to participate at least in one of the selected activity for that day, they

were free to participate in their own group according to their interest and convenience; they were free to take part in more than one activity.

**Results**

Out of 35 elderly participants, 21 (60%) of them were male (Table No. 1) Almost all the participants (97.1%) came in that old age home within 15 years but only one (2.9%) elderly lives since 36 years. Most (80%) of the subjects met with their family members at least once in a year, but only about one forth (28.6%) were getting financial support from their family to live their life. All the women participated in the study were house-wife.

The mean post-test evaluation score of QOL were significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) higher than the pretest score of QOL on all the four domains; physical, psychological, social and environmental (Table No.2). The maximum improvement was found in Social QOL score (Mean Difference of 15.1). The age of the elderly and physical QOL was negatively correlated (Pearson correlation;  $r = -0.38$ ).

Male inmates had significantly higher physical and social QOL (table no. 3) than female residents of old age home. Married people had significantly higher environmental QOL score than single/widowed and elderly with higher qualification had higher physical QOL than less educationed/illiterate.

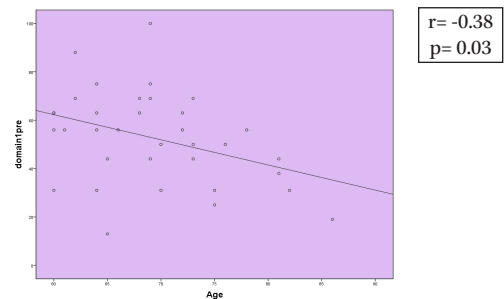
**Table No. 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of sociodemographic characteristics of the study participants**  
N=35

Sociodemographic variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
60-64	11	31.4
65-69	9	25.7
70-74	7	20.0
75 & above	8	22.9
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	21	60.0
Female	14	40.0
<b>Educational Status</b>		
Illiterate	5	14.3
Primary school	11	31.4
Secondary school	13	37.1
College	3	8.6
Professional	3	8.6
<b>Marital status</b>		
Unmarried	2	5.7
Married	12	34.3
Widow	21	60.0
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	32	91.4
Muslim	3	8.6
<b>Duration in old age home</b>		
0 - 5 years	23	65.7
More than 5 year	12	34.3
<b>Previous experience of other old age home</b>	9	25.7
<b>Living with spouse in old age home</b>	6	17.1
<b>Financial support from the family</b>	10	28.6
<b>Meeting with family members</b>		
1 - 6 months	22	62.9
6 - 12 months	6	17.1
Never	7	20.0
<b>Occupation before coming to old age home</b>		
Business/self-employed	6	17.1
Government job	7	20.0
Private job	2	5.7
Farmer	6	17.1
House-wife	14	40.0

**Table 2: Pretest-Posttest difference in QOL score of elderly.**

QOL score	Mean±SD		Mean difference	t-value <sup>s</sup>	Difference of 95% Confidence interval		Sig. (p value)
	Pretest	Posttest			Lower	Upper	
<b>Physical QOL score</b>	52.6±19.2	62.9±10.9	10.3	4.8	5.62	14.96	<b>0.001*</b>
<b>Psychological QOL score</b>	57.2±17.6	62.6±11.8	5.4	3.2	1.99	8.75	<b>0.003*</b>
<b>Social Relationship QOL</b>	46.5±17.5	61.6±8.7	15.1	6.0	10.0	20.23	<b>0.001*</b>
<b>Environmental QOL</b>	65.9±12.7	69.3±9.4	3.4	2.7	0.83	5.97	<b>0.01*</b>

df= 34, \*Significant at 0.05 level, \$paired t-test



**Fig no. 1: Correlation between age and physical QOL of Elderly**

**Table No. 3: Association between QOL scores and Selected sociodemographic variables of elderly**

Domain	Selected variables	f	Mean±SD	Std. error	t-value	Sig. (p value)
<b>Physical QOL score</b>	<b>Gender</b>			6.0	2.8 <sup>s</sup>	<b>0.008*</b>
	Male	1	59.4±18.6			
	Female	4	42.4±15.6			
	<b>Education</b>				3.5 <sup>e</sup>	<b>0.03*</b>
	Illiterate	5	45.2±19.3			
	Primary	11	42.6±16.2			
	Secondary	13	56.3±14.1			
	Graduate	6	69.0±23.8			
<b>Social QOL score</b>	<b>Gender</b>			5.3	2.5 <sup>s</sup>	<b>0.02*</b>
	Male	21	51.7±18.7			
	Female	14	38.7±12.5			
<b>Environmental QOL score</b>	<b>Marital status</b>			4.1	2.5 <sup>s</sup>	<b>0.02*</b>
	Single	23	62.4±12.2			
	Married	12	72.7±11.3			

\*Significant at 0.05 level <sup>s</sup>one-way ANOVA <sup>e</sup>Independent t-test

**Opinion of the elderly persons about the planned activities:**

Majority (88.6%) of the participants opined that they felt pleasure and enjoyed the planned activities and most of them (80%) expressed that they will be happy if those planned activities continuously organized in their old age home. Three fourths (77%) of the participants felt that these activities were good companion of loneliness and were useful for them, 71.4% felt that these helped in ventilation of their feelings, 65.7% participants said that they gained some positive energy through planned activities, 60% stated that it facilitated them to develop interpersonal relationship among inmates and 22.9% of the participants thought that activities helped them to have good sleep.

**Discussion:**

From the social context, the problems and needs of elderly living in

old age home is different than who are living with their family. Since most of the old age home residents are deprived of family care and relationship, fulfilling their social and psychological needs through activities involving their inmates found to be effective in improving QOL life on all dimensions such as physical, psychological, social and environmental QOL. The study was undertaken with the overall goal of understanding the existing institutional facilities available for the care of the elderly and to obtain a perspective on various aspects associated with institutional living and some planned activities can be designed in such a way which would provide some physical, recreational and communicational activities which would leave the positive impact on the QOL of elderly person in all the dimensions of health.

### Conclusion

The elderly face a number of problems and have a great degree of difficulty to adjust with them which collectively disturb their QOL. The findings of the study showed that elderly of the old age home participated in the study significantly gained their QOL life. Introduction of planned activities with a guidance of trained expert may improve the QOL of elderly living in old age home.

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