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Prevalence of cognitive impairment among elderly residing in old age homes

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Abstract

Aging is a universal process of life growth and experience. Aging population is increasing in number and proportion all over the world. The aging of the world's population is the result of the continued decline in fertility rates and increased life expectancy. The more developed regions of the world has been leading with a highest number of aging population since the beginning of this century. In other parts of the globe, aging population have also been accelerating.

These changes are now occurring at an unprecedented rate, according to The State of World Population 1998, a report released by the United Nations (UN) Population Fund. Societies are now faced with meeting the need of the elderly in order to provide more equity between generations. We can safely say that never before in human history has this kind of explosion happened.

Objective: To identify the cognitive impairment among the elderly.

Material and Methods: Quantitative approach was adopted to assess the cognitive impairments among elderly in old age home.

Results: The results showed mean value of 5.15 and a standard deviation of 0.671 in the mean value was 4.65 and standard deviation was 0.587.

Keywords: Prevalence, cognitive impairment

Introduction

Aging is a universal process of life growth and experience. Aging population is increasing in number and proportion all over the world. The aging of the world's population is the result of the continued decline in fertility rates and increased life expectancy.

The elderly are outnumbering the young people all over the world. Globally, the rate of growth of the aging population is exceeding the general population.

The world health organisation (WHO) has projected that the elderly population in the developed nation would decrease from 19% to 12% by 2026 and the developing countries would account for three fourth of the world's elderly population.

The cognitive functions of every individual are to be treasured and are to be maintained to its optimal functioning. Cognitive functions can be retained if one involves himself in learning, reading, doing activities that involves concentration, doing physical exercise also refreshes our mind and makes it more active. As for now the society of the elderly population is suffering with cognitive impairments varying at its level ranging from mild, moderate to severe. Moderate and severe forms need medical assistance for its cure, whereas mild cognitive impairment may be rectified to a certain levels by involving the individual in activities that stimulate the brain.

Objectives: Identify the cognitive impairment among the elderly, The cognitive impairment with specific demographic variables of the elderly.

Material and Methods: Quantitative approach was adopted to assess the cognitive impairments among elderly

Research Design: Non experimental descriptive research design was used in this study

Sitting: The study was conducted in sharan oldage home Puducherry.

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Target Population: The elderly with mild cognitive impairment residing at old age home located in Puducherry.

Sample Size: The size was 40 for the study.

Sampling technique: The sampling technique used was convenience sampling technique.

Description of The Tool: The tool used in this study consists of two sections:

Section-I: Contains demographic variables.

Section-II: Contains Montreal Cognitive Assessment scale

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables of the elderly.

Demographic Variables	Frequently Distribution n= 40			
	No.	%	No.	%
1. Age in years				
a. 60-64 yrs	9	45	7	35
b. 65-69 yrs	8	40	11	55
c. 70-74 yrs	2	10	1	5
d. >75 yrs	1	5	1	5
2. Gender				
a. Male	10	50	9	45
b. Female	10	50	11	55
3. Marital Status				
a. Married	5	25	2	10
b. Widow/ Widower	15	75	18	90
4. Education				
a. Basic informal education	4	20	4	20
b. Elementary level	8	40	7	35
c. High School level	5	25	6	30
d. Hr. Secondary level	3	15	3	15
5. Occupation				
a. Skilled	1	5	1	5
b. Unskilled	9	45	8	40
c. House wife	10	50	11	55
6. Religion				
a. Hindu	14	70	16	80
b. Christian	6	30	4	20

Table 1: Illustrates the distribution of demographic variables of 40 elderly, the majority of 9 (45%) of the elderly were in the age group of 60-64 years, 8 (40%) belonged to 65-69 years, two (10%) belonged to 70-74 years and one (5%) belonged to above 75 years.

Major Findings of the Study

With regards the distribution of demographic variables of 40 elderly, the majority of 9 (45%) of the elderly were in the age group of 60-64 years, 8 (40%) belonged to 65-69 years, two (10%) belonged to 70-74 years and one (5%) belonged to above 75 years.

- With regard to the marital status five (25%) were married, 15 (75%) were widows and widowers, in two (10%) were married, and 18 (90%) were widows and widowers.
- With regard to education, in four (20%) had basic informal education eight (40%) were educated up to elementary level, five (25%) were educated up to high school level, and three (15%) were educated up to higher secondary level. In four (20%) had basic informal education, seven (35%) were educated up to elementary level, 6 (30%) were educated up to high school level, and 3 (15%) were educated up to higher secondary level.
- With regard to the occupation, in, 1 (5%) was a skilled worker, 9 (45%) were unskilled workers, and 10 (50%) were house wives. In the 1 (5%) was skilled worker, 8 (40%) were unskilled, and 11 (55%) were house wives.
- With regard to religion, in the study group 14 (70%) were Hindus, and six (30%) were Christians.

Nursing implications

Nursing Practice

Most of the elderly suffer from depression, worthlessness, rejection by the care takers, and some may even end up losing hope to live their later years of life, because they have to depend on others for carrying out their routine activities due to their cognitive impairment, this may not be revealed during hospitalization as most of the elderly patients do not express these problems.

Nursing Education

The concept of preservation of cognitive functions is to be concentrated among the elderly.

Nursing Administration

The nursing administrators should organize programs on proper resources for the nursing staffs to implement brain training exercises on the elderly.

Nursing Research

Research enables nurses to build on the existing knowledge. More researches can be conducted on cognitive impairment among elderly.

Recommendations for future research

- This study can be replicated on a larger scale.
- The study can be done by maximizing the time period of brain training exercises.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the elderly with cognitive

impairment leads to various mental health problems. As a Psychiatric nurse, responsible to give awareness in preventing and promoting to restore their mental health.

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