

A Study on Psychological Well Being of Elderly Living in Institutional and Non – Institutional Settings

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ABSTRACT

Ageing is an inevitable developmental phenomenon bringing along a number of changes in the physical, psychological, hormonal and the social conditions. The aged become increasingly dependent on others. Psychological well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. There are several psychological and social factors that have been linked to increased individual life expectancy and quality of life in old adults. The sample size of 60 of which 30 from Institutions and 30 from Non- Institutions was collected in Guntur District . Rfyy psychological well-being scale and Beck depression scale were used to measure the psychological well-being of elderly. Results showed that there was a significant difference in psychological well-being of elderly living in Institutions and Non-Institutions.

Key words: Health, Hormonal, Ageing, Guntur District

INTRODUCTION

Old age is the last stage of human life span, accompanied with decreasing energy and body resources⁸. Ageing is progressive development in life span and a marker of life's journey towards growth and maturity. The word aging is a phenomenon that has been widely discussed in the last decades². Aging is an inevitable developmental phenomenon bringing along a number of changes in the physical, psychological, hormonal and the social conditions³.

Old age homes are mushrooming throughout the country as an attractive alternative institution to check social, economic, and

psychological problems as well as to provide protection and care to the elderly destitute . Rani observed that there are a good number of destitute elderly who need old age homes, for the essential needs of food, shelter and medicine.

Psychological wellbeing and health are closely related, and the link may become more important at older ages, if only because the prevalence of chronic illness increases with advancing age. As life expectancy increases and treatments for life-threatening disease become more effective, the issue of maintaining wellbeing at advanced ages is growing in importance.

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Studies of older people indicate that evaluations of quality of life are affected by the person's state of health, but the frequent finding that average self-reported life evaluation in the population increases with age suggests that psychological wellbeing is affected by many factors other than health. These include material conditions, social and family relationships, social roles and activities, factors that also change with age. There is a growing research literature suggesting that psychological wellbeing may even be a protective factor in health, reducing the risk of chronic physical illness and promoting longevity.

Psychological well-being is being studied extensively as there is a need to improve the state of mental conditions of people and are getting affected by mental health problems. Psychological well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. There are several psychological and social factors that have been linked to increased individual life expectancy and quality of life in old adults. Psychological wellbeing has been examined as an indicator of successful adaptation during old and very old age.

Psychological wellbeing studied extensively as there is a need to improve the state of mental condition of people. Researchers find a large number of people are getting affected by mental health problem⁴.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The sample was drawn from institutions of elderly located in Guntur District, whereas the sample for non-institutional elders were taken from families residing in Guntur. The sample of 60 was selected purposively out of which 30 respondents were from the institutions and 30 respondents were from the non-institutions. The data was collected from 3 old age homes. The sample consists of the age group ranging from 60-80 years. The research design adopted in the present study was Ex-Post facto research design. Data was collected through in depth interviews with the help of Standardized scales and open ended questionnaire from the selected respondents. Rfyy psychological well-being scale and Beck depression scale were used to measure the psychological well-being of elderly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: eneral profile of the elderly residing in institutional and non - institutional settings

VARIABLES	INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS		NON INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS	
	Frequency (n=30)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n=30)	Percentage (%)
AGE GROUP				
60-69	11	37	17	57
70-80	19	63	13	43
GENDER				
Male	15	50	15	50
Female	15	50	15	50
RELIGION				
Hindu	14	47	18	60
Christian	16	53	12	40
TYPE OF FAMILY				
Joint	9	30	14	47
Nuclear	15	50	10	33
Extended	6	20	6	20
MARITAL STATUS				
Widowed	19	63	17	57
Married	11	37	13	43
EDUCATION				
Illiterate	16	53	21	70
Literate	14	47	9	30
OCCUPATION				
Not working	20	67	10	33
Working	10	33	20	67
FINANCIAL POSITION				
Independent	10	33	12	40
Dependent	20	67	18	60

From the above table (1) it is inferred that more than half(63 percent) of the elderly persons living in the institutions are 70-80 (middle old) years were living in single families whereas more than half of the elderly persons (57 percent) living in the non-institutions are in the age group of 60- 69 (young old) years were living in joint families. More than half of elderly are Christians from institutional settings whereas

more than half of elderly are Hindus from non-institutional settings. More than half of the elderly (53percent) in the institutions were illiterate and more than half of elderly persons (67 percent) were not working and financially dependent whereas more than half of the elderly persons (70 percent) living in the non-institutions are literate and 67 percent were working and 60 percent were financially independent.

Table 2: Distribution of dimensions of psychological well being of the elderly residing in the institutional and non- institutional settings

S.no	Dimensions	Institutional settings		Non-Institutional Settings	
		Frequency (N=30)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (N=30)	Percentage (%)
I.	Autonomy				
	High	15	50	18	60
	Moderate	15	50	12	40
	Low	0	0	0	0
II.	Environmental Mastery				
	High	18	60	19	63
	Moderate	12	40	13	37
	Low	0	0	0	0
III	Personal Growth				
	High	6	20	12	40
	Moderate	21	70	18	60
	Low	3	10	0	0
IV	Positive relations				
	High	14	47	16	53
	Moderate	12	40	14	47
	Low	4	13	0	0
V	Purpose in life				
	High	0	0	20	67
	Moderate	24	80	10	33
	Low	6	20	0	0
VI	Self Acceptance				
	High	6	20	18	60
	Moderate	0	0	0	0
	Low	24	80	12	40
VII	Health status				
	Good	5	15	8	24
	Average	25	85	22	76
	Poor	0	0	0	0
VIII	Depression				
	High	14	47	2	7
	Moderate	22	76	26	86
	Low	0	0	2	7
	Overall Psychological wellbeing				
	High	7	21	9	30
	Moderate	23	79	21	70
	Low	0	0	0	0

From the above table (2) it is inferred that half of the elderly from the non-institutional settings in all the dimensions of psychological well being of elderly scored higher and moderate scores when compared to the elderly in the institutions whereas in depression majority of the elderly from the institutional settings scored moderate on depression followed by high where as majority of the

elderly (86 percent) from the non institutional settings scored more than half followed by equal percentages in higher and lower levels of depression.

Majority of the institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly scored moderately on health followed by good levels of health status.

Table 3: Significant differences in the psychological well being of the elderly residing in the institutional and non- institutional settings

		Mean	S.D.	Z-Calculated
Autonomy	Institution	22.267	3.532	6.572*
	Non –Institution	30.800	6.172	
Environmental Mastery	Institution	25.200	3.986	4.666*
	Non-Institution	29.533	3.159	
Personal Growth	Institution	22.467	5.450	4.238*
	Non-Institution	27.933	4.495	
Positive Relations	Institution	22.200	1.068	6.157*
	Non-Institution	29.700	0.586	
Purpose in life	Institution	22.767	3.390	6.994*
	Non-Institution	30.533	5.050	
Self-Acceptance	Institution	24.767	4.256	5.246*
	Non-Institution	30.833	4.691	
Health	Institution	22.467	2.968	3.090*
	Non-Institution	24.867	3.048	
Over all Psychological Well being	Institution	163.667	24.521	6.906*
	Non-Institution	204.733	21.436	

* Significance at the 0.05 level

From the above table it is inferred that there was significant difference among the dimensions of the psychological wellbeing of the elderly residing in institutionalized and non-institutionalized settings. There was significant difference in the overall psychological wellbeing of the elderly living in institutions and non-institutions. It was found that the psychological well being of the elderly living in the non-institutions was higher when compared with the elderly living in institutions.

CONCLUSION

There was a significant difference in the psychological wellbeing of elderly persons residing in institutional and non-institutional settings. It shows that the elderly persons residing in the non-institutions has higher psychological well being as the elderly are

provided with better social interactions and relationships, care from the family , medical facilities and financially independent when compared to the elderly living in institutions.

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