

Quality of life among institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly: A comparative study

*T. V. SAPTHAGIRI¹, PREMAB. PATIL¹, LATA PUJAR¹ AND GEETA P. CHANNAL²

¹Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Community Science, Dharwad

²All India Co-ordinated Research Project- Women in Agriculture

University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad - 580 005, India

*E-mail: sapthachinnu143@gmail.com

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Abstract: Ageing is a natural process that causes several changes in social, hormonal, psychological, and physical circumstances. A person's ageing is influenced by a variety of factors, including physiological, social, psychological, economic, environmental, and cultural factors, all of which have a substantial impact on the elderly's quality of life. The present study investigated the quality of life among institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly in Hubli-Dharwad taluk during 2021-22. The sample comprised 180 elderly (ninety from institutionalized setting and ninety from non-institutionalized setting) aged 65 years and above were drawn through the purposive sampling method. The self-structured questionnaire, Older people's Quality of life-35 and Agarwal's socio-economic status scale were used for collecting information. The results revealed that the female population (55.60%) was more among the institutionalized elderly, while the male population (54.90%) was more among the non-institutionalized elderly. As per age of the elderly 75-84 years old were more (43.40%) among institutionalized elderly and 62 years old were more (68.90%) among non-institutionalized elderly. When it comes to education, most of the institutionalized elderly were studied up to the 10th standard (33.30%) but most of the non-institutionalized elderly were illiterates (32.20%). According to socio-economic status (SES), most of the institutionalized elderly (38.90%) had upper middle SES category and most of the non-institutionalized elderly (51.10%) had lower middle SES category. The quality of life was high (58.90%) among non-institutionalized elderly as compared to the institutionalized elderly (35.60%).

Key words: Institutionalized elderly, Non-institutionalized elderly, SES, Quality of life

Introduction

Ageing is a natural process that causes in several changes in social, hormonal, psychological, and physical circumstances. A person's ageing is influenced by a variety of factors, including physiological, social, psychological, economic, environmental, and cultural factors, all of which having substantial impact on the elderly's quality of life. Human resource is an important asset for the economic growth and development of a country. The proportion of people aged over 60 years is growing faster than any other age group in almost all countries due to longer life expectancy and declining fertility rates. At present, human life expectancy at birth has almost doubled in developed countries and resulted in an increased percentage of elderly people (Prakash *et al.*, 2019). India is the second largest population of elderly (60+) in the world. As per the 2001 census, the number of older persons was 70.6 million (6.91%) in 2011 it was 94.8 million (8.30%), in 2016 it was 118 million (9.30%) and in 2026 it is expected to touch 173 (12.4%) million.

The life of the aged is becoming more and more miserable and there is a growing dissatisfaction among the older population that they are not being taking care of, as they deserve. The ageing process is very subtle and the changes are slow. However, by mid-60 the changes are more noticeable physically. Their vulnerability increases with age. The vulnerability lies mainly in lack of employment, financial insecurity, ill health and neglect by society. Any system of social security of the elderly should address all these vulnerabilities. It has to be a multi-dimensional programme providing income security, health

security and emotional support. While the family can provide the basic security, the major responsibility for providing social security to the elderly lies on the community and the state in the era of modernization and industrialization. Hence the growing visibility of old age homes in India. This idea of institutionalization of the aged has largely been borrowed from the western countries. In the context of the dynamic changes taking place in Indian society, the problem of the aged has assumed importance. The gap between the needs of old people and the availability of services has given rise to such institutions. Rapid pace of industrialization and urbanization, disintegration of joint family structures into nuclear ones, increasing participation of families in non-agricultural labor force, the older people have become more vulnerable. The lack of familial support made elderly resort to old age homes run by private and or voluntary organizations for their care and support. The several consequences of such trends, one that causes serious concern is that of providing care to a large number of older persons to have better quality of life.

Quality of life is a composite measure of an individual's functional health, feelings of ability, independence in day-to-day activities, and satisfaction with social conditions. The World Health Organization defines the quality of life (QoL) as "an individual's perception of his/her position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which he/she lives, and in relation to his/her goals expectations, standards and concerns". It is a broad-ranging concept, incorporating in a

comparing way the person's physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships and their relationship to salient features of their environment.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To assess the quality of life among institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly.
2. To study the influence of selected factors on the quality of life of the elderly.
3. To study the relationship between selected factors and quality of life among the elderly

Material and methods

A population based cross-sectional study was conducted by using purposive sampling method. The target population of the study was elderly living in old age homes and residing with the family in the age group of 65 years and above of Hubli-Dharwad taluk. A total of 180 elderly (ninety living in old age homes and ninety residing with the family).

Tools used for the study

Self-structured questionnaire: Self-structured questionnaire was used to collect the information about the respondent's age, gender, marital status, education, occupation and questions to elicit information on perceived problems by the elderly.

Quality of life (QoL): Quality of life of elderly was measured using the scale developed by Bowling and Stenner (2011). The scale comprises of 35 statements with eight domains. It was rated on 5point Likert scale from "strongly disagree to strongly agree" and these items were coded as 1 to 5. All items are positive statements. The total score ranges from 0-175. The scores were classified into three categories *i.e.* low, medium and high as per the standard norms. Lower score indicated poor quality of life and higher score indicated better quality of life.

Socio-economic status (SES) : Socio-economic status of the family was estimated based on SES scale developed by Aggarwal *et al*, (2005). The scale consists of 22 statements which assesses caste, education, monthly per capita income from all sources, type of house and location, family possessions, number of children, number of earning members in the family, possession of agricultural and non-agricultural land along with animals.

Statistical analysis: Frequency and percentage were calculated to interpret the demographic variables like age, gender, education, marital status, occupation and SES of family. Chi-Square test was used to find out the association between residence and quality of life. Data was analyzed by using SPSS 26.0 version software.

Results and discussion

Table 1 represents the demographic characteristics of institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly. The total sample comprised of 180 elderly (90 institutionalized and 90 non-institutionalized). With regard to age, 43.40 per cent elderly belonged to 75-84 (43.40%) years age group followed by 34.40

per cent between 65-74 years age group and 22.20 per cent to 85 years old and above age category among the institutionalized elderly. Further, among non-institutionalized elderly, 68.90 per cent elderly belonged to 65-74 years, 23.30 per cent between 75-84 years and 7.80 per cent above 85 years age category. Gender-wise distribution revealed that, more than half (55.60%) of the elderly were females, followed by males (44.40%) among institutionalized elderly and among non-institutionalized elderly more than half (54.40%) were males and 45.60 per cent were females. With regard to education, among the institutionalized elderly, 33.30 per cent had completed 10th standard, 21.20 per cent studied up to primary education, 18.80 per cent elderly were illiterates, 7.80 per cent had completed graduation, 6.70 per cent had attended primary school for at least 1 year, 5.50 per cent were just literate but had not attended formal school, only 4.40 per cent had done their post-graduation and 3.30 per cent had completed their professional courses like CA and MBA. Among non-institutionalized elderly, 32.20 per cent were illiterates, 23.30 per cent had studied up to primary education, 16.70 per cent had attended school for just one year, 11.10 per cent had completed education up to 10th standard, 8.90 per cent had completed graduation and 7.80 per cent were just literates but had not attended formal schooling. Regarding marital status 44.40 per cent were married followed by widowed (35.60%) and unmarried (20.00%) among institutionalized elderly. With respect to non-institutionalized elderly, three fourth (76.70%) were married followed by 21.10 per cent widowed and 2.20 per cent unmarried elderly. Further, it is observed from the same table that 40.00 per cent of the elderly were self-employed with income less than 5000 (for example laborer, housewife) followed by 25.60 per cent who were working under central or state government, 13.30 per cent were working in private sector, 11.10 per cent were self-employed with income above 5000 and 10.00 per cent elderly were working at shops, home, transport and some were cultivating their own land. With respect to non-institutionalized elderly, 48.90 per cent of them were self-employed with income less than 5000 (for example laborer, housewife), 14.40 per cent were working at shops, home, transport, and some of them were cultivating their own land, 13.30 per cent were working under central or state government, 12.30 per cent were self-employed with income above 5000 and 11.10 per cent elderly were working in the private sector. Regarding socio-economic status (SES), 38.90 per cent of the elderly had upper middle SES followed by high SES (32.20%) and 28.90 per cent belonged to lower middle SES category among institutionalized elderly. Further, among non-institutionalized elderly, more than half (51.10%) of them had lower middle SES followed by upper middle SES (28.9%), poor SES (11.10%) and high SES (8.90%).

The association and comparison of quality of life between institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly is described in Table 2. The association of quality of life between institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly was found to be significant at 1 per cent level ($X^2=11.60^{**}$). It was found

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly N=180

Variables	Category	Institutionalized elderly (n=90)	Non-institutionalized elderly (n=90)
Age (in years)	60-74	31 (34.40)	62 (68.90)
	75-84	39 (43.40)	21 (23.30)
	85 & above	20 (22.20)	7 (7.80)
Gender	Male	40 (44.40)	49 (54.40)
	Female	50 (55.60)	41 (45.60)
Marital status	Unmarried	18 (20.00)	2 (2.20)
	Married	40 (44.40)	69 (76.70)
	Widowed	32 (35.60)	19 (21.10)
Education	Professional qualification with incl. Ph.D)technical degrees or diplomas e.g. doctor, engineering. CA, MBA, etc.	3 (3.30)	-
	Post graduation (non-technical	4 (4.40)	
	Graduation	7 (7.80)	8 (8.90)
	10 th class pass but < graduation	30 (33.30)	10 (11.10)
	Primary pass but < 10 th	19 (21.20)	21 (23.30)
	< Primary but attended school for at least one year	6 (6.70)	15 (16.70)
	Just literate but no schooling	5 (5.50)	7 (7.80)
	Illiterate	16 (17.80)	29 (32.20)
Occupation	Service in central/state/public undertaking	23 (25.60)	12 (13.30)
	Servicing in the private sector	12 (13.30)	10 (11.10)
	Service at shops, home, transport, own cultivation of land	9 (10.00)	13 (14.40)
	Self-employed with income > 5000	10 (11.10)	11 (12.30)
	Self-employed with income < 5000 (labourer, house wife)	36 (40.00)	44 (48.90)
	None of family member is employed	-	-
Socio-economic status (SES)	Upper high	-	-
	High	29 (32.20)	8 (8.90)
	Upper middle	35 (38.90)	26 (28.90)
	Lower middle	26 (28.90)	42 (51.10)
	Poor	-	14 (11.10)
	Very poor	-	-

Figures in the parentheses indicates percentage

Table 2. Association and comparison of quality of life between institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly N=180

	Quality of life				X ² value	Mean±SD	t-value
	Low	Medium	High	Total			
Institutionalized elderly (n=90)	27 (30.00)	31 (34.40)	32 (35.60)	90 (100.00)	11.60**	100.84±36.11	4.17**
Non-institutionalized elderly (n=90)	12 (13.30)	25 (27.80)	53 (58.90)	90(100.00)		122.61±33.76	

Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage

** indicates p£0.01 level of significance

that the quality of life was high (58.90%) among non-institutionalized elderly compared to institutionalized elderly (35.60%). The mean value was also found to be high (122.61) among the non-institutionalized elderly than institutionalized elderly (100.84) and the difference was found to be significant at 1 per cent level ($t=4.17^{**}$). The results of the present study is in line with the study carried out by Trama and Mehta (2021), Prakash *et al.* (2019) and Amonkar *et al.* (2018) wherein it was found that the quality of life was better in non-institutionalized elderly as compared to institutionalized elderly.

Table 3 shows the association between quality of life and demographic characteristics among institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly. About age, a significant association was found between age and quality of life of both institutionalized ($X^2=31.65^{**}$) and non-institutionalized elderly ($X^2=36.12^{**}$). Concerning gender, a significant association ($X^2=31.58^{**}$) was found between gender and quality of life among institutionalized elderly, whereas the association remains non-significant ($X^2=4.97^{NS}$) among non-institutionalized elderly. With regard to education, a significant association was

Table 3. Association between quality of life and demographic characteristics among institutionalized and non-institutionalized elderly

Variables	N=180									
	Quality of life									
	Institutionalized elderly (n=90)					Non-institutionalized elderly (n=90)				
	Low	Medium	High	Total	Modified X ² value	Low	Medium	High	Total	Modified X ² value
Age (years)										
65-74	10 (32.30)	13 (41.90)	8 (25.80)	31 (34.40)	28.90**	42 (67.70)	17 (27.40)	3 (4.90)	62 (68.90)	17.0 7**
75-84	-	29 (74.40)	10 (25.60)	39 (43.40)		14 (66.60)	4 (19.10)	3 (14.30)	21 (23.30)	
85 & above	-	8 (40.00)	12 (60.00)	20 (22.20)		-	4 (57.20)	3 (42.80)	7 (7.80)	
Gender										
Male	10 (25.00)	30 (75.00)	-	40 (44.40)	41.40**	45 (91.80)	4 (8.20)	-	49 (54.40)	40.8 1**
Female	-	20 (40.00)	30 (60.00)	50 (55.60)		11 (26.90)	21 (51.20)	9 (21.90)	41 (45.60)	
Education										
Illiterate	-	8 (38.10)	13 (61.90)	21 (23.30)	28.92**	19 (52.80)	10 (27.80)	7 (19.40)	36 (40.00)	11.0 8*
Primary education	3 (12.00)	8 (32.00)	14 (56.00)	25 (27.80)		21 (58.30)	13 (36.10)	2 (5.60)	36 (40.00)	
Upper primary education	7 (15.90)	34 (77.30)	3 (6.80)	44 (48.90)		16 (88.90)	2 (11.10)	-	18 (20.00)	
Marital status										
Unmarried	3 (16.60)	13 (72.20)	2 (11.20)	18 (20.00)	25.33**	1 (50.00)	1 (50.00)	-	2 (2.20)	4.90 NS
Married	7 (17.50)	26 (65.00)	7 (17.50)	40 (44.40)		47 (68.10)	16 (23.20)	6 (8.70)	69 (76.70)	
Widowed	-	11 (34.40)	21 (65.60)	32 (35.60)		8 (42.10)	8 (42.10)	3 (15.80)	19 (21.10)	
Occupation										
Working	10 (15.40)	44 (67.70)	11 (16.90)	65 (72.20)	28.95**	49 (80.40)	10 (16.40)	2 (3.20)	61 (67.80)	27.3 5**
Non-working	-	6 (24.00)	19 (76.00)	25 (27.80)		7 (24.10)	15 (51.80)	7 (24.10)	29 (32.20)	
Socio-economic status (SES)										
Low	4 (14.30)	15 (53.60)	9 (32.10)	28 (31.10)	13.98*	17 (56.70)	7 (23.30)	6 (20.00)	30 (33.40)	5.72 NS
Medium	2 (6.10)	13 (39.40)	18 (54.50)	33 (36.70)		25 (65.80)	12 (31.60)	1 (2.60)	38 (42.20)	
High	4 (13.80)	22 (75.80)	3 (10.40)	29 (32.20)		14 (63.60)	6 (27.30)	2 (9.10)	22 (24.40)	

Figures in the parentheses indicates percentage

** Significant at 1 per cent level* Significant at 5 per cent level NS-Non-significant

observed between education and quality of life of both institutionalized ($X^2=40.59^{**}$) and non-institutionalized elderly ($X^2=13.99^*$). With respect to marital status, a significant association ($X^2=28.07^{**}$) was found between the marital status and quality of life of institutionalized elderly, whereas the association was found to be non-significant in non-institutionalized elderly ($X^2=1.08^{NS}$). With regard to occupation, a significant association ($X^2=37.81^{**}$) was found between occupation and quality of life of institutionalized elderly, whereas the association remains non-significant in non-institutionalized elderly ($X^2=4.57^{NS}$). With respect to socio-economic status, a significant association ($X^2=25.07^{**}$) was found between socio-

economic status and quality of life of the institutionalized elderly, whereas the association remains non-significant in non-institutionalized elderly ($X^2=5.45^{NS}$).

Conclusion

In the present study, it was revealed that, the quality of life was better among non-institutionalized elderly as compared to institutionalized elderly. The study also revealed that quality of life was more among elderly aged 65-74 years compared to elderly aged 75-84 years and 85 years and above age categories. It is also evident that the quality of life was good among elderly males as compared to their female counterparts.

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