

Socialization activities and quality of life among the elderly in Thirunelveli East PHM area

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Background and objective: Quality of life among the elderly is multifactorial. Socialization plays a crucial role in social and psychological wellbeing. This study aims to assess socialization activities, quality of life and the relationship between socialization activities and quality of life among the elderly in Thirunelveli East PHM area.

Methods: This was a community-based descriptive cross-sectional study. Participants were selected by simple random sampling. Data were collected from October to December 2019 with an interviewer-administered questionnaire. Quality of life was measured by CASP19 (Control, Autonomy, Self-realization, and Pleasure 19). Data were entered in SPSS (v21) and analyzed using descriptive and bivariate statistical methods.

Results: The mean age was 70.6 years (± 7.4) with female predominance (53.6%, n=150). Almost half (49.6%, n=139) gathered in public places with friends at least once a year. Reading was the most popular recreational activity. Over half (52.9%, n=148) used social media, among them Viber (65.5%, n=97) and WhatsApp (64.9%, n=96) use were prominent. Although 235 (44.3%) preferred to go to places of worship, among them, 70% engaged in individual prayers. In the sample, 145 (51.8%) had good quality of life, while 127 (45.4%) had average and 8 (2.9%) had poor quality of life. Although there was no statistically significant association between socialization activities and quality of life ($p=0.215$), engaging in recreational activities ($p<0.05$) and involvement with friends and family ($p<0.01$) were associated with better quality of life.

Conclusion: The majority of elders in Thirunelveli East PHM area engage in socialization activities. Most elders read for recreation. Although widespread spirituality is prevalent, socialization is lacking in engagement in religious activities. Participating in recreational activities and involvement with family and friends is associated with better quality of life among the elderly in Thirunelveli East.

Keywords: Elders, Socialization, Quality of Life, Spirituality, Jaffna