

Assessment of Self-esteem among Older Adults in Selected Places at Puducherry

Gayathri S

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ABSTRACT

Background: Self-esteem among the elderly is an important area of concern that reflects the health status and well-being of this vulnerable population. Their number in the developing world is increasing due to demographic transition.

Objectives: This present study was conducted to assess the self-esteem among elderly persons in selected areas, Puducherry.

Methodology: A quantitative descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. A total sample of 200 elderly persons was selected by using convenience sampling technique. Data were collected by using sociodemographic variables, Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale.

Results: The study results revealed that the majority of elderly people, 80.5%, had normal self-esteem.

Conclusion: The study concluded that self-esteem of the elderly increases their well-being that also improves.

Keywords: Elderly, Self-esteem, Vulnerable population.

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INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem is the conviction in one's capacity for thought, assurance in one's entitlement to success, happiness, and deservingness, as well as the expression of one's needs and desires. Self-esteem is a gauge of how much we value and accept ourselves or other people. It is linked to the ideas and opinions we hold about ourselves.¹

The way a person thinks of themselves and their coping mechanisms are both intimately related to their level of self-esteem. Nokani et al.'s findings showed that a good body image leads to a person's sense of worthiness, and vice versa, a mental image that has changed causes changes in the sense of worthiness.^{2,3}

The growth of one's self-esteem is influenced by a variety of circumstances. Respect, acceptance, and attention from important persons in one's life, such as family members, are among them. The individual's past record of accomplishment, status, and position obtained is the next factor. The more successful someone is and the more well-known they are, the higher their self-esteem will be. Self-esteem can be defined as the sentiment, regard, and feeling that people have for themselves, namely how much they like themselves, how they see themselves, and how they see themselves.⁴

Self-worth is essential to an aged person's quality of life. About 250 men and women aged 65 and older were researched to determine whether background and personality traits were linked to low and high self-esteem in the elderly. Age, income, educational attainment, or housing arrangements did not make a difference in the number of elderly with high or poor self-esteem.⁵⁻⁹

However, the group with low self-esteem reported having worse health, greater discomfort, and more disability. Both with and without controlling for health characteristics, the low self-esteem group scored considerably higher on sadness, anxiety, somatization, and a preference for external locus of control.

OBJECTIVES

- To measure the self-esteem levels of older adults.

Department of Mental Health Nursing, Sri Lakshmi Narayana College of Nursing, Koodapakkam, Puducherry, India

Corresponding Author: Gayathri S, Department of Mental Health Nursing, Sri Lakshmi Narayana College of Nursing, Koodapakkam, Puducherry, India Phone: +91 7598413697, e-mail: nithiyashri57@gmail.com

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- To determine the association between the levels of self-esteem among older adults and specific demographic factors.

METHODOLOGY

The sample was chosen using a descriptive survey design and convenience sampling method. There were 200 senior people in the whole sample. After receiving approval from the relevant authority, the data were gathered.¹⁰ Men and women above the age of 50, people who can hear, understand, and answer logically and practically, and people who scored above 20 on the mini-mental status exam are all included in the inclusion criteria. Elderly people who were chronically unwell and unwilling to engage in the study are among the exclusion criteria. Prior to data collection, each sample provided informed consent. The Rosenberg self-esteem scale was used to measure the levels of self-esteem among older adults. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics.^{11,12} To determine the frequency and percentage, mean, and standard deviation, descriptive statistics were utilized. Self-esteem was linked to a number of demographic variables using inferential statistics like the Chi-square test (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of demographic factors by frequency and percentage among older adults based on demographic variables (N = 200)

Demographic variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age		
65–72	129	64.5
73–79	51	25.5
80–89	20	10.0
Gender		
Male	83	41.5
Female	117	58.5
Others	–	–
Residence		
Urban	160	80.0
Rural	40	20.0
Religion		
Hindu	144	72.0
Muslim	25	12.5
Christian	31	15.5
Others	–	–
Marital status		
Married	130	65.0
Widow(er)	17	8.5
Divorcee, separated	–	–
Unmarried	53	26.5
Educational status		
Illiterate	25	12.5
SSLC	80	40
Primary education	50	25
Secondary education	25	12.5
Undergraduate	17	8.5
Postgraduate	3	1.5
Previous occupation		
Housewife	88	44.0
Unemployed	3	1.5
Unskilled	–	–
Professional	–	–
Services	14	7.0
Retired	95	47.5
Number of children		
No child	17	8.5
1	16	8.0
2	80	40.0
More than 2	87	43.5
Type of family		
Joint	56	28.0
Nuclear family	99	49.5
Living along	45	22.5
Source of income		
Pension	154	77.0
Services	1	0.5
Agriculture	3	1.5
Business	42	21.0

(Contd...)

Table 1: (Contd...)

Demographic variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Health status		
Diabetes mellitus	62	31.0
Hypertension	50	25.0
Coronary artery disease	15	7.5
Any previous surgery	12	6.0
Healthy	61	30.5
Perceived family support		
Yes	159	79.5
No	41	20.5
Types of family support		
Mental support	82	41.0
Sharing household activities	80	40.0
Taking care of children/others	38	19.0

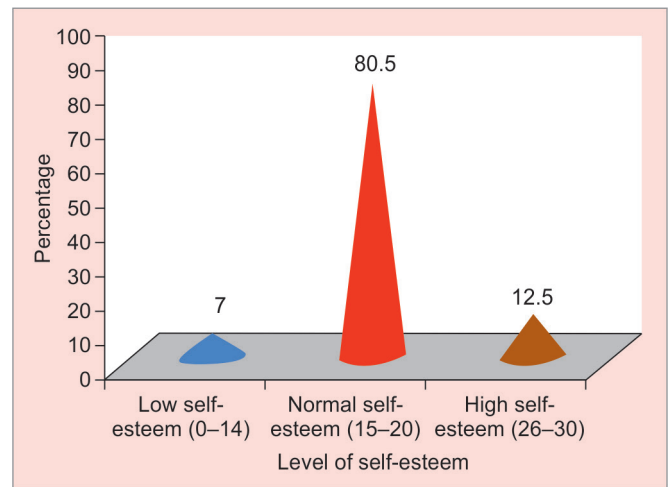


Fig. 1: Distribution of the level of self-esteem among older adults, both in terms of frequency and percentage

RESULTS

Figure 1 found that the most of senior people, 80.5%, had normal self-esteem, 12.5% had strong, and 7% had low level of self-esteem.

Table 2 shows that demographic variables such as source of income ($\chi^2 = 17.835, p = 0.007$) and educational status ($\chi^2 = 23.725, p = 0.008$) were associated with the self-esteem of older adults at the 0.05 and 0.01 significance levels, respectively. The remaining demographic factors had statistically not significantly correlated with the older adult's degree of self-esteem at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels.¹³

DISCUSSION

The first objective of the study was to measure the self-esteem levels of older adults. According to the study's findings, the most of seniors (80.5%) had normal self-esteem, 12.5% had strong, and 7% had poor level of self-esteem.¹⁴

Nanthamongkolchai provided support for this study. He conducted a cross-sectional study on 270 elderly people in rural Nakhon Sawan Province to determine their level of self-esteem. The study's sampling method was a straightforward random one. The Rosenberg self-esteem measure was the test the researcher used to

Table 2: Association of self-esteem among older adults with specific demographic variables (N = 200)

Demographic variables	Low		Normal		High		Chi-square value		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			
Age									
65–72	10	5.0	104	52.0	15	7.5	$\chi^2 = 4.389$	Df = 4	p = 0.356 (NS)
73–79	1	0.5	43	21.5	7	3.5			
80–89	3	1.5	14	7.0	3	1.5			
Gender									
Male	8	4.0	72	36.0	13	6.5	$\chi^2 = 1.146$	Df = 2	p = 0.564 (NS)
Female	6	3.0	89	44.5	12	6.0			
Others									
Residence									
Urban	13	6.5	125	62.5	22	11.0	$\chi^2 = 3.007$	Df = 2	p = 0.222 (NS)
Rural	1	0.5	36	18.0	3	1.5			
Religion									
Hindu	12	5.5	115	57.0	14	6.5	$\chi^2 = 5.249$	Df = 4	p = 0.263 (NS)
Christian	0	0	27	14.5	8	5.0			
Muslim	2	1.5	19	9.0	3	1.0			
Others	–	–	–	–	–	–			
Marital status									
Married	09	4.0	99	49.0	19	9.0	$\chi^2 = 5.193$	Df = 4	p = 0.268 (NS)
Widow(er)	1	0.5	12	5.5	1	1.0			
Divorcee, separated	–	–	–	–	–	–			
Unmarried	3	4.0	48	26.0	7	3.5			
Educational status									
Illiterate	3	2.0	17	8.0	2	0.5	$\chi^2 = 23.725$	Df = 10	p = 0.008 S**
SSLC	3	1.0	66	32.5	7	3.0			
Primary education	5	2.0	48	23.5	5	3.0			
Secondary education	2	1.5	19	10.0	4	2.5			
Undergraduate	0	0	0	0	3	2.0			
Postgraduate	1	0.5	11	6.5	4	1.5			
Previous occupation									
Housewife	5	2.0	74	36.5	6	2.5	$\chi^2 = 8.028$	Df = 6	p = 0.236 (NS)
Unemployed	2	1.5	3	2.0	0	0			
Unskilled	–	–	–	–	–	–			
Professional	–	–	–	–	–	–			
Services	2	1.5	13	7.0	3	2.5			
Retired	5	2.0	71	35.0	16	7.5			
Number of children									
No child	6	3.0	65	32.5	15	7.5	$\chi^2 = 8.724$	Df = 6	p = 0.190 (NS)
1	0	0	15	7.5	1	0.5			
2	6	3.0	69	34.5	5	2.5			
More than 2	2	1.0	12	6.0	3	1.5			
Type of family									
Joint	3	2.0	44	21.5	8	3.5	$\chi^2 = 3.637$	Df = 4	p = 0.457 (NS)
Nuclear family	8	3.0	77	38.0	10	4.5			
Living along	3	2.0	40	21.0	7	4.5			
Source of income									
Pension	8	3.5	126	62.5	17	8.0	$\chi^2 = 17.835$	Df = 6	p = 0.007 S**
Services	0	0	2	1.5	0	0			
Agriculture	4	3.0	2	1.5	8	4.5			
Business	2	1.0	31	15.0	0	0			
Health status									
Diabetes mellitus	4	1.5	48	23.5	7	3.0	$\chi^2 = 4.912$	Df = 8	p = 0.767 (NS)
Hypertension	4	2.5	39	19.0	6	2.5			

(Contd...)

Table 2: (Contd...)

Demographic variables	Low		Normal		High		Chi-square value
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Coronary artery disease	2	1.5	16	9.0	2	1.5	
Any previous surgery	3	2.0	10	5.5	0	0	
Healthy	2	0.5	50	25.5	8	3.5	
Perceived family support							
Yes	10	4.5	126	62.5	20	9.5	$\chi^2 = 0.356$ Df = 2 $p = 0.837$ (NS)
No	4	2.5	35	18.0	5	3.0	
Types of family support							
Mental support	5	3.0	68	33.5	10	5.5	$\chi^2 = 6.476$ Df = 4 $p = 0.166$ (NS)
Sharing household activities	8	3.5	59	30.0	12	5.5	
Taking care of children / others	1	0.5	34	17.0	3	1.5	

** $p < 0.01$ NS, not significant; S, significant

assess the self-esteem level. Older people (65.6%) had a moderate degree of self-esteem, whereas only 19.3% and 15.1%, respectively, had low levels. It is important to encourage seniors to participate in social and family gatherings.¹⁵⁻¹⁷

The second objective of the study was to determine the association between the levels of self-esteem among older adults and specific demographic factors. The association between self-esteem and a few demographic factors among older adults reveals that, at the 0.05 and 0.01 significance levels, respectively, source of income ($\chi^2 = 17.835, p = 0.007$) and educational status ($\chi^2 = 23.725, p = 0.008$) had statistically significant associations with self-esteem of the older adults. The other demographic factors had statistically not significantly correlated with the elderly's degree of self-esteem at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels, respectively.

CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, the majority of older people reported average self-esteem. It is crucial to instill in the family members, especially the children, the importance of supporting the elderly physically, socially, and environmentally. The elderly should receive enough social support to retain their dignity and have happy lives free from burdens on their families and society. Elderly people's well-being also improves when their level of self-esteem rises.

LIMITATION

Due to the spread of the COVID-19 infection, it was challenging to get data during the data collection from the participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To generalize the study's conclusions, it may be repeated with larger samples and in different contexts.
- To more effectively generalize the outcomes of this investigation, probability sampling techniques can be used.
- It is possible to compare older people from rural and urban areas in terms of self-esteem.
- The findings of the present investigation will support the implementation of an aged rehabilitation program.

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