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PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND HEALTH AMONG ELDERLY

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ABSTRACT:

The age structure of population is changing rapidly as a result of increased longevity, reduced fertility, decline mortality and better health care facilities. According to the population census 2011 there are nearly 104 million elderly persons (aged 60 years or above) in India; 53 million female and 51 million males. This is expected that in 2050 the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will be increased from 900 million to 2 billion people over the age of 60. Elderly stage is the evening of human life cycle. It is

undesirable, unwelcome and unavoidable part of human life, because as elderly stage grows, there is a gradual downfall in physical strength and mental stability. Psychological well-being and health are closely related at elderly age. Psychological well-being does not require individual to feel good all the time. The experiences of pain, failure, disappointment and grief emotions are a normal part of everybody's life. Being physically healthy is hugely important. It can be the key to a long, fulfilling life. Having a healthy body means you are equipped to deal with the challenges of everyday life, fight off illnesses and function well, allowing you to do the things you want to do. This paper will focus on the relationship of psychological well-being and health.

KEYWORDS: sexual desire, Compact Disc (CDs).

INTRODUCTION:

India is one of the largest country in the region according to population and it is expected that India would have a significant proportion of the world's elderly because of their large population base. According to the population census 2011 there are nearly 104 million elderly persons (aged 60 years or above) in India; 53 million female and 51 million males. (Elderly in India 2016) [1]. The elderly people

are the fastest growing sector in the society, and it is estimated that by the year 2050, the number of elderly people would rise to about 324 million [2].

Aging is progressive development in life span and a marker's of life's journey towards growth and maturity. The world aging is a phenomenon that has been widely discussed in last decades. Aging is an inevitable developmental phenomenon brings along a number of changes in the physical, social, psychological and emotional conditions. Elderly stage is an

interesting part of human life. It is the evening of human life cycle. It is undesirable, unwelcome, unavoidable part of human life. But it is interesting to note that everybody wants to live long but no one wants to be elder, because as elderly stage grows, there is a gradual downfall in physical strength, mental stability, financial independence and self-security.

Who are elderly people? When are we old? Whenever a person becomes a grandmother or a grandfather, than people may call her or him an elderly woman or man. Again when a person goes

to retirement, definitely he or she is an old person. So a person can be coined old at 60 or 61 years of her or his age. In elderly stage both physical and psychological capacity deteriorates due to many factors. Many elderly people enjoy life. But a significant proportion struggle with loneliness, isolation, stress, negligence from family and low level mental and health problems.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING AND HEALTH IN ELDERLY:

Psychological wellbeing is particularly relevant to elderly with lots of reasons certain groups of elderly are at more risk of psychological well-being than others. The concept of well-being comprises two main elements: feeling and functioning well. Feeling of enjoyment, happiness, curiosity and engagement are some characteristics that have a positive experience of their life. **According to Nic Marks-**“well-being is not a beach you go and lie on. It’s a sort of dynamic dance and there’s a movement in that all the time and actually it’s the functionality of that movement which actually is true levels of well- being” [3]. Psychological well-being consists of positive relationships with others, personal mastery, autonomy in life, and personal growth and development (Ryff, Carol. 1989) [4]. Psychological well-being does not require individual to feel good all the time. The experiences of pain, failure, disappointment and grief emotions are a normal part of everybody’s life. Being able to manage these emotions is essential for long term well- being. Recently WHO has defined positive mental health as “ a state of well-being in which the individual realize his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”(WHO, 2001)[5].

Defining of human health as more than the absence of illness has been a long-standing though elusive objective (WHO 1948) [6].

One route to advancing health, constructed as the presence of wellness, is to focus on what its mean to flourish, such as heaving having a sense of purpose and direction in life, good quality relationship with others, and abilities to one’s potential[7].

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND HEALTH AMONG ELDERLY:

Psychological well-being and health are closely related to each other and this link become more important in old age. There is a growing research literature suggesting that psychological well-being may even be a protective factor in health, reducing the risk of chronic physical health and promoting longevity. It has also been argued that psychological well-being should be addressed in measures of health valuation, and be considered in health care resource allocation. Psychological well-being has been examined as an indicator of successful adaptation during old age [8].

Larson summarized previous studies of psychological well-being performed over a 30 year period (1940s-1970s) and noted that the construct is strongly associated with physical health status, functional status, and socio-demographic factors, including occupation, income, education level, and the degree of social interaction[9].

The elderly are on the whole less healthy than the non-elderly. Among elderly increasing age is associated with higher morbidity and higher use of health services. Physical health is most commonly used index to assess the psychological well-being of individuals. As people grow elder they might perceive that their physical health is not as good as it has been in the past. The prevalence rates of chronic conditions, was shown in a study of Danish centenarians. They found that there were few healthy centenarians and that most Danish centenarians had several common diseases and chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease (72%), osteoarthritis (54%), hypertension(52%), dementia (51%) and ischemic heart disease (28%). Andersen- Ranberg et al [10]. Psychological well-being has been examined as an indicator of successful adaptation during old and very old age [11]. The research group led by Carol Ryff, has found some of the most interesting results in this area. In samples with elderly women, they have found that those with higher levels with life purpose, more felling of personal growth and better interpersonal relationship showed lower cardiovascular risk (lower levels of glycosylated haemoglobin, lower body weight, lower waist to hip ratios, higher rate of good cholesterol and better endocrine regulation, that is, lower cortisol levels in the saliva throughout the day [12].

Ill health is also associated with reduced positive wellbeing. For example, one study of 11,523 older men and women in ELSA showed that chronic illnesses were associated with lower hedonic and eudemonic wellbeing [13].

Hamashima examined previous studies of psychological wellbeing and concluded that it was influenced by physical health and other factors such as age, marital status, occupation, and economic status [14].

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this study was to highlight the relationship between psychological wellbeing and health among elderly. In general health is recognized as one of the most indicators of psychological wellbeing in elderly life. Health is commonly used as an indicator to assess the well-being of individuals. As people grow older they might perceive that their physical health is not that good as in their past. The importance of health impairments and biomarkers had an independent direct effect on subjective health and they had a direct and indirect association with psychological wellbeing among elderly. As shown in previous studies, we can see that there is a close relationship between health and psychological wellbeing. In other words, an individual's psychological well-being is affected by medical history, current physical symptoms and body sensations, and health.

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