

QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG ELDERLY PARTICIPANTS IN SOCIAL CENTERS: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

Qualidade de vida em idosos participantes de centros de convivência: uma revisão integrativa

Calidad de vida en ancianos participantes de centros de convivencia: una revisión integrativa

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to analyze the scientific productions about the participation of the elderly members of Centers of Coexistence for the Elderly and their influence on the quality of life of the participants. **Method:** it is an integrative review of the literature from the descriptors: centers of coexistence for the elderly, quality of life, elderly, aging. **Results:** 45.4% evaluated the quality of life of the elderly participants of the coexistence groups; 27.3% identify the perception of the elderly regarding the groups for their quality of life; and 27.3% discuss the tendency of elderly people to participate in activities carried out in community centers and what types of activities. **Conclusion:** we identified the predominance of quality of life in senescent participants of the coexistence groups for the elderly and their positive satisfaction. It is important to emphasize the need for advances in relation to research on the quality of life of the elderly members of groups living together, as well as the activities carried out in these groups.

Keywords: Aging; Quality of life; Seniors; Centers for coexistence for the elderly, Health.

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RESUMO

Objetivo: analisar as produções científicas acerca da participação dos idosos integrantes de Centros de Convivência para Idosos e a influência destes na qualidade de vida dos participantes. **Método:** trata-se de uma revisão integrativa da literatura a partir dos descritores: centros de convivência para idosos, qualidade de vida, idoso, envelhecimento. **Resultados:** 45,4% avaliam a qualidade de vida dos idosos participantes dos grupos de convivência; 27,3% identificam a percepção dos idosos quanto aos grupos para sua qualidade de vida; e 27,3% discutem sobre a tendência de participação dos idosos em atividades desenvolvidas nos centros de convivência e quais os tipos de atividades. **Conclusão:** identificou-se, a predominância da qualidade de vida em senescentes participantes dos grupos de convivência para idosos e a satisfação positiva dos mesmos. Destaca-se a necessidade de avanços em relação às pesquisas acerca da qualidade de vida dos idosos integrantes de grupos de convivência bem como as atividades realizadas nestes.

Descritores: Envelhecimento; Qualidade de vida; Idosos; Centros de convivência para idosos, Saúde.

RESUMÉN

Objetivo: analizar las producciones científicas acerca de la participación de los ancianos integrantes de Centros de Convivencia para los ancianos y su influencia en la calidad de vida de los participantes. **Método:** se trata de una revisión integrativa de la literatura a partir de los descriptores: centros de convivencia para ancianos, calidad de vida, anciano, envejecimiento. **Resultados:** 45,4% evalúan la calidad de vida de los ancianos participantes de los grupos de convivencia; El 27,3% identifica la percepción de los ancianos en cuanto a los grupos para su calidad de vida; y el 27,3% discute sobre la tendencia de participación de los ancianos en actividades desarrolladas en los centros de convivencia y cuáles son los tipos de actividades. **Conclusión:** se identificó, la predominancia de la calidad de vida en senescentes participantes de los grupos de convivencia para ancianos y la satisfacción positiva de los mismos. Se destaca la necesidad de avances en relación a las investigaciones acerca de la calidad de vida de los ancianos integrantes de grupos de convivencia así como las actividades realizadas en estos.

Descriptores: Envejecimiento; Calidad de vida; Los ancianos; Centros de convivencia para ancianos; Salud.

INTRODUCTION

Demographic projections estimate that the number of older people in the world will reach nearly 2.1 billion by 2050, exceeding not only the number of children, but also that of the adolescent and youth (up to 24 years). National Household Sample Survey (PNAD, 2018) found that the population has maintained this aging trend during recent years and has gained 4.8 million seniors since 2012, surpassing the 30.2 million mark in 2017.²

Thus, it is necessary to provide the elderly not only with opportunity for longer life, but also with a better quality of life, which is directly related to their perceived well-being, considering that aging is not only a biological phenomenon, but also a social one dependent on how the elderly feel, live, relate to life and to other individuals.³

Therefore, we recognize that the participation of the elderly in social centers brings benefits in terms of knowledge acquisition; promotion of the therapeutic effects on physical

and psychological health; formation of social and emotional support networks, promoting friendships and exchange of experiences and the promotion of a space for leisure.⁴

Some of these practices are implemented through extension projects designed by colleges and universities. They bring together professionals and students from various areas of health sciences who develop multidisciplinary methods that promote autonomy and active aging, seeking to promote new ways of understanding and living with the aging process.⁵

These spaces of social interaction emerged with the objective of contributing to the promotion of self-esteem, social inclusion, enabling leisure, knowledge, overcoming health problems, performing physical activities and handicrafts, emphasizing entertainment as a strategy to improve the quality of life of the elderly.⁶

Thus, it allows understanding the experiences of the elderly, demystifying the aging process and the negative aspects associated with it, still apparent among the elderly through reports of disbelief, doubts and discredited thoughts, although there is also a desire for long and healthy life.⁷ Encouragement is needed for older people to better relate to society and family, creating a link that can prevent loneliness and gradually transform and improve quality of life of the elderly.⁸

Elderly participants in social groups show better social skills and higher self-esteem when compared to those who do not participate. Reaffirming the relevance of these groups in the lives of the elderly, they are considered a motivational agent that improves the interaction among people.⁹

Given the above, this study aimed to analyze the scientific production about the participation of the elderly members of Seniors Social Centers (SSC) and their influence on the participants' quality of life.

METHODS

This is an integrative literature review that includes analyzing, synthesizing studies and previous research on the subject, providing support the researcher by bringing up previously discussed and analyzed facts on a particular topic.¹⁰

The construction of the integrative review included six steps: 1) identification of the study problem, the theme and selection of the guiding question; 2) establishment of inclusion and exclusion criteria (literature search); 3) Identification of pre-selected and selected studies (data collection); 4) Categorization of selected studies 5) Analysis and interpretation of results; 6) Presentation of the review / synthesis of knowledge.¹¹

Thus, the research began with the definition of the problem and the guiding question as follows: what literature is there on the participation of the elderly in seniors social centers (SSC) and their influence on the quality of life? The survey took place between December 2018 and January 2019.

The Virtual Health Library (VHL) was used and the following keywords were adopted from the Health

Sciences Descriptors (DeCS): social centers for the elderly, quality of life, elderly, aging, connected by the Boolean operator AND. This led to the identification of 32 articles. As inclusion criteria, we adopted “complete and available articles in Portuguese, English and Spanish”, which left 31 articles. Those studies that did not respond to the objective and guiding question of the study, were repeated in the databases and review or reflection articles, case reports, theses and dissertations were excluded from the study. Due to the scarcity of articles on the study theme, there was no temporal delimitation.

As a result, respecting the predetermined criteria of the study, 6 articles were excluded due to repetition; 10 studies were excluded for not being in accordance with the objectives

and guiding question; 2 were excluded because they were review studies and 2 because they were theses, leaving in the sample 11 articles. All of these articles were carefully analyzed as to the guiding question, aiming to describe and classify the knowledge of the theme in question, finally defining the thematic categories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the 11 studies selected and read in full, the results and information collected were organized and arranged in a table by reading sequence, organized by the number of the study, represented by the vowel (E), title, year of publication, objectives of the studies and main results as follows.

Table 1 - Study data according to study identification number (E), title, year of publication, objectives and main results. Joao Pessoa, PB, Brazil, 2019

Study (E)	Title	Year	Objetives	Main results
E1 ²	Level of participation in social and recreational activities of the elderly in Barranquilla, Colombia.	2013	To determine the level of participation of the elderly in social and recreational activities in Barranquilla, Colombia.	The scale categorized 40.9% of subjects with low participation and only 20.2% actively and voluntarily participating in the activities offered.
E2 ³	Social group for the elderly in primary health care	2019	To analyze the contributions of the elderly social group to active aging in the perspective of its participants.	Three thematic categories emerged positively commented by the elderly: social group as an opportunity for socializing leisure for the elderly, as a learning space for the elderly and the importance of the Social Group in the process of health promotion and active aging of the elderly.
E3 ⁴	Leisure in the social centers of the municipalities of northern Paraná.	2018	Identify leisure activities for the Seniors Social Centers (SSC) based on the interests of the elderly in terms of their quality of life.	The activities developed by the social centers analyzed are not in line with the taste of individuals and are repeated over time, without respecting the cultural and social changes of each generation.
E4 ⁵	Balance, functional mobility and quality of life in elderly participants and non-participants in a community center.	2017	To evaluate balance, functional mobility and quality of life in elderly participants and non-participants of a social center.	The study found that elderly participants in a community center had better balance, functional mobility and quality of life as compared to the elderly in the same community who did not participate in community centers.
E5 ⁶	Quality of life and nutrition in elderly participants of social centers.	2016	To detail the demographic characteristics, nutritional profile and quality of life of the elderly who attend the Centers for the Third Age of São Caetano do Sul.	There were statistically significant differences between the elderly participants and non-participants of social groups regarding daily energy satisfaction, mobility and work ability.
E6 ⁷	Ability to perform key activities of daily living in the elderly: Ethno-nursing.	2016	To analyze the health and nursing interventions proposed in social groups for the elderly.	The workshops were contextualized according to the needs of the elderly to perform daily activities. The social group was mentioned as a promoter of the culture of active and healthy aging.
E7 ⁸	Quality of life assessment: comparison between non-institutionalized elderly participants of a community center and institutionalized elderly in JI-Paraná / RO.	2015	To evaluate the quality of life of elderly people living in a non-institutionalized social center, and to evaluate the quality of life of elderly people living in a long-term care facility for the elderly (LSIE)	The institutionalized elderly presented a lower degree of satisfaction when compared to the non-institutionalized elderly, in the four domains of WHOQOL-bref and the six domains of WHOQOL-OLD.

Study (E)	Title	Year	Objetives	Main results
E8 ¹⁹	Perception of the quality of life of elderly participants and non-participants of a senior social group in Catanduva (SP).	2015	Compare the perception of quality of life of elderly participants and non-participants in a social group	Elderly participants in the social group presented higher percentages in all WHOQOL-BREF domains and in all facets of WHOQOL-OLD.
E9 ⁶	Perception of the elderly about group living: a study in the city of Cajazeiras-PB.	2014	Investigate elderly people's perceptions about social groups.	The central ideas and the collective discourses were represented by: reasons / reasons for the elderly to seek social groups; the importance of meetings with the group for the elderly; changes in life after joining the group.
E10 ²⁰	Quality of life of the elderly in a social group.	2011	Describe the quality of life of elderly participants of a social group.	The facet that contributed the most was the functioning of the sensory, followed by the facets death and dying and social participation.
E11 ²¹	Measurement of the quality of life of the elderly in social centers.	2011	Measure the quality of life of the elderly participants of social groups and identify their bio-psycho-social needs	Most participants considered their quality of life as good and reported that they were satisfied with their current health status. Mean scores related to WHOQOL-Brief and WHOQO-Old domains showed that the Psychological domain received the highest score.

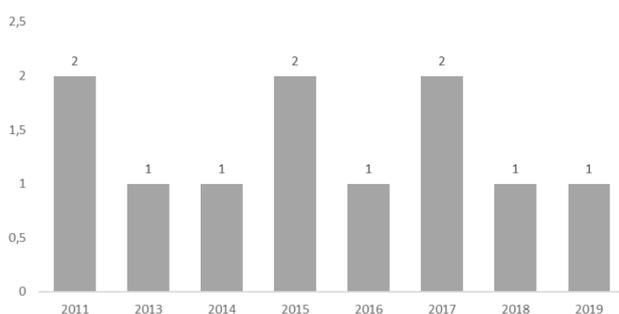
Source: Organized by the authors.

Eight articles based on the studies in Table 1 (72.7%) were published in the Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Literature - LILACS, two (18.2%) in the Nursing Databases - BDNF and only one (9.1%) in INDEX-Psychology.

Regarding the journals in which the articles were published, two (18.2%) were found in *Scientia Medica* (Porto Alegre, Online), two (18.2%) in the *Interdisciplinary Studies on Aging* and only one (63.6%) was found in seven different journals: *Revista de Salud Pública*; *Research Magazine: Care is Fundamental - Online*; *Brazilian Journal of Science and Movement*; *Bahia Journal of Public Health*; *Anna Nery School Journal of Nursing*; *Brazilian Journal of Geriatrics and Gerontology*; and *Journal of the Institute of Health Sciences*.

The years of publication were between 2011 and 2019 as detailed in Graph 1 below.

Graph 1 - Distribution of studies by year of publication. João Pessoa, PB, Brazil, 2019



Source: Organized by the authors.

Based on the objectives of the articles analyzed, we observed that five (45.4%) seek to assess the quality of life of the elderly participants in the SSCs; three (27.3%) aim to identify how the elderly perceive the influence that the SSCs have on their quality of life; and three (27.3%) seek to discuss the tendency of elderly participation in activities of the SSCs and the types of activities they engage in.

By analyzing the studies of this integrative review, we identified three thematic categories, namely: Sociodemographic aspects of elderly participants in SSCs; Senior Social Centers as promoters of quality of life; and Activities performed at SSCs and the perception of the elderly of their quality of life. A single study can be attributed to more than one thematic category as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 - Distribution of studies by thematic category. Joao Pessoa, PB, Brazil, 2019

Thematic category	Identifier of the study (E)	N (%)
Category 1: Sociodemographic aspects of elderly participants in SSCs	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E8, E9, E10, E11.	10 (90,9%)
Category 2: Social Centers for Seniors as quality of life promoters	E2, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E11.	9 (81,8%)
Category 3: Activities performed in SSCs and the perception of the elderly of their quality of life	E1, E2, E3, E5, E6, E7, E9.	7 (63,6%)

Source: Organized by the authors.

Category 1: Sociodemographic aspects of elderly participants in SSCs

Based on the sociodemographic characteristics of the elderly who participate in the SSCs, the studies above show that majority are female^{6,12-17,20-21}, aged between 60 and 83 years^{6,12-17,19,21} predominantly married^{13-14,16,19} followed by widowhood^{6,20-21}.

The prevalence of elderly women in these centers is linked to greater life expectancy due to factors such as greater concern about their health status, decreased consumption of cigarettes and alcohol, the types of jobs, among other factors. In addition, a considerable presence of women as compared to men in all surveys is striking and may be related to the types of activities at the SSCs, which tend to be educational, cultural and entertaining, such as dancing²⁴, requiring greater interaction among the elderly and leaving men feeling shy.

Studies show that married elderly have better physical and mental health due to their social context. Thus, it is vitally important that the elderly maintain close relationships with family and friends to alleviate their loneliness and its consequences. In this context, the SSCs offer an alternative to achieve a higher quality of life for this social group, since in the centers joint participation is stimulated through activities that are intended for both mind and body.

Regarding the level of education, we found that majority had elementary education, whether complete or not.^{6,16-17,19,20-21} Regarding work, five articles^{6,16-17,19,20-21} reported that majority of the elderly received retirement. Only three studies^{16-17,20} reported income between 1 and 3 minimum salaries.

Socioeconomic difficulties linked to low educational level are apparent among the elderly. Many studies show that retirement is the main source of income for the elderly. Oftentimes it proves to be insufficient to meet their needs, as frequently it is the only income that family receives and is used to meet the needs of everyone, thus setting aside items important for the well-being of the elderly.²⁵

Category 2: Social Centers for Seniors as Quality of Life Promoters

Based on the analysis of the influence of the SSCs on the quality of life the participants' perception of this influence, nine articles^{6,13,15-19,20-21} fit this category. When questioned about the importance of SSCs to their quality of life, the elderly stated that they help their social integration, providing opportunities for interaction and establishment of bonds of friendships, helping to avoid social isolation and depression normally linked to aging and the loss of loved ones.^{6,13} In addition to psychological well-being, they reinforce the value of knowledge and learning acquired through health education activities, encouraging autonomy of the elderly and improvement in the overall health of each of the interviewees.¹³

In a study conducted with elderly participants of the SSC, the variables related to physical activity^{15,19}, frequency of falls and associated diseases obtained a positive tendencies when

compared to the elderly who did not participate in any SSC. The SF-36 Quality of Life questionnaire also demonstrated significant differences in all domains for the elderly SSC participants when compared to those who are not part of any group and indicating higher quality of life can be proven in the first group of respondents.¹⁵ We also highlight the perception of quality of life by the elderly in the SSCs as good or very good.¹⁶

Elderly SSC participants claim that having autonomy and functional capacity, enjoying freedom and being able to perform their daily life activities are directly related to being healthy.^{6,17} In sum, elderly SSC participants perceive their quality of life as good.²¹ Thus, they excluded the discourse on the absence of disease, although chronic diseases are a common feature among the elderly.¹⁷ Therefore clearly social groups for the elderly are significant spaces for well-being and quality of life, basis for the socialization and autonomy of the participants.²⁶

Category 3: Activities performed in SSCs and the perception of how they promote the quality of life

Seniors in some of the SSCs are encouraged to propose the activities based on their preferences.^{14,17} We found that the favorites were cinema, physical activities and sports, games, followed by fishing and bowling, singing / music lessons, walks and dance classes, achieving. The lowest score was attributed to manual activities (handicrafts) in promoting leisure, interaction and physical and mental well-being.¹⁴ Many of these activities were mentioned in the other studies included in this review.^{6,12-13,16-18} Some of the other activities offered included language classes that aim to exercise cognitive memory, civic activities, falls prevention project adult literacy, water aerobics and gymnastics classes as well as the celebration of festive dates.¹⁸

Physical activities and consequently socialization are considered of great importance, since they show positive results according to the reports of the elderly²⁷, while dance promotes a better balance, allowing greater autonomy for daily life activities.²⁸ In addition, it is possible to restore the recent and long-term memory, as well as the self-esteem of the elderly.²⁹

In other similar studies^{30,31}, the elderly who participated in the SSCs chose dance as their preferred activity (50%), followed by physical activities (27%), walks (20%), among others. Such activities are linked to the improvement in the quality of life, prevention of functional deficits and active aging, reduction of depressive symptoms when compared to those who did not engage such activities.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the publications demonstrated positive evaluation by the elderly participants of the SSCs in relation to their quality of life, as well as differences between elderly participants and non-participants of the SSCs, with a higher

percentage of quality of life reported by those who were part of the study group.

Based on the results of this study, the creation of SSCs focused on promoting health and influencing physical, emotional and social well-being, is fundamental.

This study allowed us to highlight the scarcity of national and international studies on this topic, thus there is a need for further research on the quality of life of elderly SSC members, as well as the types of activities they engage in.

Thus, we hope that this research will contribute to the development of new studies on this topic, positively contributing to the holistic health care of the elderly, influencing the development of new methods of applicability in their well-being.

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