

Quality of life and its associated factors among aged living in Nallur Divisional Secretariat, Jaffna District, Sri Lanka

K. Thanujan^{1*}, L. Kamalarupan¹, D. Thabotharan¹, P.A.D. Coonghe²

¹Unit of Allied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

²Department of Community & Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

*thanujan.k@gmail.com

Introduction: Sri Lanka is a one of the fastest aging countries in the world. Hence, there is an urgent requirement to give more attention to the aged and also the need for the care of the elderly is going to rise as their health and functional capabilities are declining with age. The aim of this study was to assess the quality of life (QoL) and its associated factors among the aged living in Nallur Divisional Secretariat (D.S.) Division, Jaffna District.

Methodology: This was a community based descriptive cross sectional study conducted among 212 older people living in the community in Nallur Divisional Secretariat Division, Jaffna District. The sample was selected by stratified random sampling technique and participants were interviewed by using an interviewer administered questionnaire. Quality of life was measured by the modified Older People's Quality of Life Questionnaire (OPQOL). Chi square test was used to examine factors associated with quality of life among the elderly population.

Results: In this study, the male participants (61.3%) were higher than the female (38.7%) participants and most of the participants fell under the age group of 70-79 years (45.8%). Majority of the participants were married (65.1%) whereas, 80.7% of participants were living with their spouse and children. Nearly half of the (51%) participants have completed only up to primary education and nearly 40% of them indicated that their monthly family income is below Rs.15,000. More than half of the participants (59.4%) rated their health as positive. The most prevalent chronic medical problems were cataract (30.7%), hypertension (30.7%) and diabetic mellitus (29.2%). The total quality of life mean score was 132.8 (SD +/- 12.753) out of 180 and domains of "home and neighbourhood" and "social relationship" were scored as relatively good quality of life but "financial circumstance" was low. Factors such as gender, age, marital status, educational level, employment status, living arrangement, monthly family income, self-rated health and presence of chronic medical problems

showed a significant relationship with the quality of life of the participants.

Discussion: In this study, with the increase of age the quality of life was reduced. Also this study revealed that males had positive quality of life than the females. The married older people who lived with the spouse and/or children had positive quality of life than the others. Quality of life of the older people was moved positively with the increase of educational level and income and also older people who were employed had positive quality of life than the unemployed people. The older people who

perceived good self-rated health experienced good quality of life.

Conclusions: It is concluded that the older population living in Nallur D. S. Division experience a neutral level of quality of life and factors such as gender, age, marital status, educational level, employment status, living arrangement, monthly family income, self-rated health and presence of chronic medical problems showed a significant relationship with the quality of life of the participants.

Key words: Jaffna, Nallur, older people, quality of life, self-rated health,