

Geriatric Health: Scope and Benefit of Recreation

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1. Abstract

Recreational activity refers to actions that are performed solely for the enjoyment, pleasure and amusement of individuals. It is predicting that 20% of the population will fall in senior category within 2050 in Bangladesh, which is alarming, and matter of thinking indeed. Recreational activities bring mental and physical happiness and can improve physical and mental health. Lack of leisure activity brings a range of negative health outcomes. People's average life expectancy has risen to 72 years. For the last few years, it has been found that life expectancy in both male and female has increased considerably. Bangladesh has largest number of older people. Most of the older people stay with family according to our culture but few old homes also provide residency for geriatric people. Facilities to conduct recreational activity may vary person to person. As a result, senior citizen is need special attention in our society. This paper tried to review number of scientific articles on geriatric health as well as their recreational activity, which has immense role to keep them healthy and happy.

2. Introduction

Geriatric people living in community and residing in old home need recreational activity for their good health and happiness. On the other hand,

degenerative changes take place as ageing. Recreational activity delay degeneration as much as possible and keep them active, fit, cheerful in the long run. But it is usually seen that they are prone to keep them in sedentary life which welcomes number of non-curable diseases. We have tried to critically review various research studies on health status of geriatric people that has provided us to enter deeper site of health condition and also role of recreational activities on the health of older people. This review aims to fulfill the gap that exists in the literature on assessing the effect of recreational activities on health of of this vulnerable segment of the society.

3. Critical review

Recreation has double role for the sake of older people; keep them well and enhance quality of life [1]. Recreation is a major requirement if we want to keep them healthy and fit. Recreational activity refers to actions that are performed solely for the enjoyment, pleasure and amusement of individuals [2]. Due to the disintegration of joint family structures into nuclear ones and the changing role of women, the older people have become more

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Received Date: May 2, 2020; **Accepted Date:** May 4, 2020;

Published Date: May 8, 2020

vulnerable [3]. The lack of family support pushed the elderly to old age home run by private or voluntary organization for their care and support [4]. There are few old homes in Dhaka city where people get residency, food, medical service and rehabilitative care but lack of recreational activity. Very limited number of old homes are available for taking care of the older persons in Bangladesh. The ones that exist are often having too few members of staff to operate effectively and not having the necessary resources to deal with the problems of older people. Due to recent socio-economic changes, the traditional support to the elderly people is gradually changing its character because of lack of adequate family support of a formal social support system. Besides deficiency of fundamental needs, financial crisis, burden of diseases, poor health facilities and negligence from family members make this scenario more vivid and unbearable. As a result, coming up with new legislation and policies and growing awareness on this issue is now a necessity and the policy planners need to be made aware of the situation so that the Government can introduce an appropriate pension system, assisted living facilities, adult day care support and health insurance scheme to cover the need of the increasing magnitude of elderly people (BBS, 2015). The elderly percentage in Bangladesh historically was not very alarming in comparison with that in most of the other Asian countries (2010 data), and according to the long questionnaire survey data it appears so at a level of 7.7 percent. The age-specific distribution of elderly in Bangladesh does not seem to differ by gender although at a global perspective, there had been speculation in literature that percentage of female elderly may exceed the percentage of male elderly. The elderly percentages, both for males and females are found to be higher in other than rural area than that in rural area, however, and there is little observable differences among elderly percentages in

districts. Society can utilize elderly experience, wisdom and knowledge for the national development. Senior citizens are the asset of the nation [5] found the association between wellbeing and leisure activities in advanced stage of life. Literature suggests that active life style reduces risk of non-communicable diseases [6]. As opposed to, non-active or sedentary risk factors increase sufferings of geriatric people. Quality of life is a significant public health concern which primarily dependent on the activities of daily living among elderly population [7] documented that the higher incidence of malnutrition in elderly and revealed that a higher risk of malnutrition was involved among old home residents compared to elderly living in community residents [8] revealed that male had better mental health than female along with those who were performing physical activity during leisure time and economically independent. [9] carried out study among elderly sports, challenges and solutions case study: western provinces of Iran and revealed that lack of sufficient recreational and sports facilities, low levels of education, low levels of income, physical weakness, cultural factors, psychological characteristics, family and proper education play a significant role in enjoyment of sports and leisure and recommended establishing sports and recreation sites for development of elderly sports [10] conducted national health surveys on time trends in leisure time physical activity and physical fitness in elderly people to reveal that women exhibited lower prevalence of leisure time physical activity and physical fitness compared to men. [11] conducted about what determines the life satisfaction of the elderly, evaluated to determine and compare the factors associated with life satisfaction in elderly living in a residential care home and in the community in Japan and examined that the relative importance of social factors versus medical and functional factors as determinants of

life of elderly and also found these factors differ for elderly living in different environments to make effective strategy to improve the quality of life of elderly living in different conditions.

4. Conclusion

This review was undertaken to assess the effect of recreational activities on health of geriatric people residing in community and number of literatures have been critically reviewed and clearly mentioned what have been done in this field all over the world. While reviewing related articles some knowledge gaps also found in the literatures.

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Citation: Md Monoarul Haque. Geriatric Health: Scope and Benefit of Recreation. *SunKrist J Intern Med Geriatr Res*. 2020; 1: 1001.

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