

## Original Research Article

# A study of morbidity profile and health seeking behaviour of inmates of selected old age homes of Bangalore city

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Assessment of the morbidity profile will help in the application of interventions, to improve the health status and the quality of life of the elderly

**Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among the inmates of selected old age homes of Bangalore city between November to December 2019 using complete enumeration with a pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire to assess morbidity profile and health seeking behaviour.

**Results:** Majority of the study population (54.5%) was in the age group of 60-69 years followed by 80 years and above (25.5%) and 66.7% of were female. Most common morbidity identified among the elderly were Musculoskeletal disorders 100 (30.3%) followed by Diabetes 70 (21.2%), Hypertension 58 (17.6%), respiratory diseases 38 (11.5%), and Eye problems 34 (10.3%), respectively. Majority of them 208 (63.0%) relied on Government health facilities citing free services as the common reason; whereas 122 (37.0%) approached the private sector for health assistance owing to the ease of access.

**Conclusions:** Findings of the present study further reiterates the growing burden of chronic morbidities in the geriatric age group. It calls for programmes for creation of awareness among the elderly regarding regular medical checkups to ensure prevention and early detection of the chronic diseases.

**Keywords:** Morbidity, Elderly, Old-age homes, Health seeking behaviour

## INTRODUCTION

Ageing is an inevitable phenomenon in the life of all living beings. With the increase of life expectancy, the numbers of people who are attaining old age are increasing throughout the globe.<sup>1</sup> By the year 2025, the number of elderly people is expected to rise to more than 1.2 billion all over the world.<sup>2</sup> According to world health statistics 2014, globally around 11% of population is above 60 yrs of age, and 8% of population is above 60 years of age in South East Asian countries including India.<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly, the process of health transition has

accelerated in India, and consequently. India has to confront rapid ageing of population. Old age is associated with deterioration of health and increase in morbidity.<sup>4</sup> The elderly people mainly suffer from two types of health issues i.e., medical and psychosocial. Common medical problems include cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, visual, and gastrointestinal diseases etc., while common psychosocial problems include impaired memory and intelligence, anxiety, depression, rigidity of outlook, dependency and dissatisfaction with family members, earning and occupation.<sup>5</sup> Home care has grown into a vital source of health care, especially for elderly, who represent the highest percent of recipients.<sup>6</sup> Assessment of

the morbidity profile will help in the application of interventions, to improve the health status and the quality of life of the elderly.<sup>7</sup>

Yet there is relative paucity of baseline information on the prevalence of various morbidities in this population. In this context the present study was undertaken to study the morbidity profile of inmates of selected old age homes of Bangalore city.

## METHODS

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among the inmates of selected old age homes of Bangalore city between November to December 2019. The study was

conducted after obtaining informed consent from each participant. A pre-tested semi structured questionnaire was used for data collection which was carried out by direct interview method. Complete enumeration of all the inmates of three old age homes was done for the purpose of collecting the data. The data was entered in Microsoft Excel 2010 and analysed using SPSS version 21 and results are expressed in terms of percentages.

## RESULTS

Majority of the study population (54.5%) was in the age group of 60-69 years followed by 80 years and above (25.5%) and 66.7% of were female About 168 (50.9%) were literates and 162 (49.1%) were not literates.

**Table 1: Socio Demographic profile of study subjects (n=330).**

Parameters	Males (n=114) Frequency (%)	Females (n=216) Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)	
Age groups	60-69	60 (33.3)	120 (66.7)	180 (54.5)
	70-79	24 (36.3)	42 (63.7)	66 (20.0)
	80 and above	30 (35.7)	54 (64.3)	84 (25.5)
Educational qualification	Literate	66 (39.1)	102 (60.8)	168 (50.9)
	Not literates	48 (29.6)	114 (70.4)	162 (49.1)

The present study showed that, the most common morbidity identified among the elderly were Musculoskeletal disorders 100 (30.3%) followed by diabetes 70 (21.2%), hypertension 58 (17.6%), respiratory diseases 38 (11.5%), and eye problems 34 (10.3%), respectively.

**Table 2: Distribution of morbidity pattern among study subjects (n=330).**

System affected	N	%
Eye problem	34	10.3
Hypertension	58	17.6
Diabetes mellitus	70	21.2
Respiratory diseases	38	11.5
Musculoskeletal disorders	100	30.3
GIT	30	9.1
Oral lesions	50	15.2
Skin	38	11.5
Stroke	06	1.8

Eye problems included cataract, corneal opacity, respiratory diseases included chronic obstructive airway diseases (COPD) and pulmonary tuberculosis, musculoskeletal disorders included osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, gastro intestinal disorders included constipation, gastritis and abdominal pain. Oral lesions included dental caries, broken teeth and stained teeth. Skin diseases were observed in 38 (11.5%) and stroke was present in 6 (1.8%) of the study subjects. Majority of them 208 (63.0%) relied on Government health facilities citing free services as the common reason; whereas 122 (37.0%) approached the private sector for health assistance owing to the ease of access. Majority of the

study subjects i.e., 300 elderly (91.0%) opined that they would seek immediate care whenever they are sick.

**Table 3: Distribution of elderly according to their health seeking behaviour (n=330).**

Health facility being accessed, N (%)	Doctor consultation in case of sickness, N (%)	
Government hospital	Yes	300 (91.0)
	No	30 (9.0)
Private hospital	No	30 (9.0)

## DISCUSSION

Out of the 330 elderly, 290 (87.8%) were suffering from at least one of the chronic morbidities. This was in accordance to the study done by Karnakar et al.<sup>1</sup> It was observed that 34 (10.3%) of elderly were suffering from one or more eye related problems, which is lower than Prakash et al.<sup>8</sup> Hypertension is one of the major chronic conditions affecting elderly people. It can occur at any age, but the risk increases with the age.

This study found that 58 (17.6%) of the elderly were suffering from hypertension, which was proportionately more among males. This is consistent with the findings of a study done at Udaipur, Rajasthan<sup>8</sup>. Diabetes was seen among 70 elderly peoples (21.2%) in the present study, which is corroborated by a study done by Sithara et al.<sup>9</sup> respiratory diseases were noted among 38 (11.5%) of the elderly which is higher than the study done by Shradha et al.<sup>1</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Findings of the present study further reiterates the growing burden of chronic morbidities in the geriatric age group. It calls for programmes for creation of awareness among the elderly regarding regular medical checkups to ensure prevention and early detection of the chronic diseases.

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