

THE LEVEL OF COGNITION IS SIGNIFICANTLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE
QUALITY OF LIFE IN A SAMPLE OF PHYSICALLY INDEPENDENT
INSTITUTIONALIZED ELDERLY PEOPLE IN GALLE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The number of institutionalized elderly people has been increasing in Sri Lanka as a result of population ageing. Elderly people under the institutional care will not receive that much of personnel attention and care when compared with care from family members at home. Therefore cognitive functions will be increasingly important for them for independent living. This study was conducted to assess the association between cognition and quality of life (QOL) in a sample of elderly people. Study was conducted with 180 institutionalized elderly people in Galle District. The cognition was assessed via MMSE (Mini mental state examination) and QOL (Quality of Life) was assessed via WHOQOL-BREF (WHO quality of life-BREF). Correlation was assessed through spearman correlation coefficient (r) and significant level was kept at $p < 0.05$. The sample comprised of 62.2% (n=112) females and 37.8% (n=68) males with mean age of 72.16 years (+6.66). Mean score of MMSE was 22.71 (+5.70). Mean scores of overall quality of life and general health, physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environment domains of WHOQOL-BREF were 53.19 (+16.71), 59.9 (+16.61), 57.01 (+16.52), 49.51 (+24.34) and 57.88 (+15.62) respectively. MMSE score was significantly correlated with overall quality of life and general health ($r=0.44$, $p < 0.01$), physical health ($r=0.48$, $p < 0.01$), psychological health ($r=0.58$, $p < 0.01$), social relationships ($r=0.35$, $p < 0.01$) and environment ($r=0.62$, $p < 0.01$) domains of WHOQOL-BREF. Cognitive function of elderly was significantly correlated with all the domains of QOL indicating the importance of considering the cognitive functions in long term planning of care of the elderly.

Keywords: cognitive function, quality of life, elderly