

**A STUDY TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
NURSE LED COGNITIVE STIMULATION
PROGRAM (NLCSP) ON COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS
AND QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG ELDERLY IN
THE SELECTED RURAL COMMUNITY OF
PANIPAT, HARYANA**



**Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfilment of the
Award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy In
Nursing Sciences**

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Year 2023

CHAPTER-VI

CONCLUSIONS

Prevalence of decline in cognitive functioning is found to be increasing with age and may vary from the severe category of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) to dementia.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), UK, recommends cognitive stimulation therapy as it is one of the non-pharmacological approaches which significantly improves both cognitive functions and quality of life in the gold agers. This therapy has been also adopted in various non-profitable organization's clinic and private centers in India like by Samvedna senior care, which provide it in context of Indian culture-based module. Another one, DEMCARES (Dementia care in SCRAF) which is one of the WHO-collaborative mental health training centers in Chennai which facilitates it in their day care services. The goal of this study was to explore the problems of the elderly and their caregivers related to decline in cognitive functioning and to assess the extent of impact of Nurse-Led Cognitive Stimulation Program (NLCSP) on cognitive functions and quality of life among elderly after providing the training. Findings of the study highlighted various problems of elderly and their caregivers which were related to the declining cognitive functions and also that Nurse-Led Cognitive Stimulation Program as an intervention was effective for elderly in improving their cognitive functions and building up their quality of life. The following main interpretations were drawn from the study outcome:

1. Decline in cognitive functioning is the age-related process that has the adverse impact on physical and psychological wellbeing, as well as on the social life of the elderly, which becomes a cause to deteriorate the overall personality of elderly.
2. Decline in cognitive functions not only change personal, family and social life of the elderly but also disturbed their relationship with the caregiver and family.
3. Elderly as well as their caregivers have a perception of such decline and considered it as a part of their aging.
4. For their routine care, they either depend on self or on family and used mixed coping techniques like writing and repeating, with patience as the priority. While their care givers prioritize caring and helping them.
5. Level of cognitive functions score of the elderly was improved after intervention in study group as measured by Mini Mental State Examination. Also, from this research findings it was concluded that the Nurse Led Cognitive Stimulation Program was an effective strategy to refine the cognitive functions of the elderly.
6. Level of quality of life score was refined post intervention in study group as measured by QOL-AD scale. From the study findings it was concluded that the Nurse Led Cognitive Stimulation Program is an effective intervention to build the quality of the life of elderly.
7. A slight level of increase in the mean level of cognitive functions and quality of life score in post-test 2 and 3 as compared with post-test 1 shows the gradual building up of cognitive functions score and quality of life score.
8. The elderly's cognitive functions and quality of life were positively correlated with each other.
9. The age among all socio-demographic variables was significantly associated with quality of life score at 0.05 level of significance.

Implications of the study

Implication referred as utilization of the findings generated from the study in the nursing profession. The findings of the study can be used to generate new programs, teaching aids and other useful material for the nursing. The implications can be done in different fields of nursing and the present study has implications as under:

Nursing Practice

- Nurses can utilize the Cognitive Stimulation Program (CSP) for the refinement of cognitive functions and quality of life of self and others.
- Community mental health nurses can actively conduct a Cognitive Stimulation Program (CSP) training program in community areas and can contact the welfare organizations for the elderly, and can conduct such training programs to restore mental health of the elderly. Additional facilities, administrative support, and adequate funds for conducting these programs would be further beneficial to the outcome.
- Nurses should assume the responsibility and accountability to promote the cognitive abilities and quality of life of gold agers as it is one of the essential functions in overall promotion of health of the elderly, and it would lead to healthy physical and mental aging.

Nursing Education

- Nursing is a science that deals with human beings in all aspects. Nursing students need to realize the importance of promotion of cognitive functions and quality of life in their lives and also incorporating their knowledge in theory and practice to promote total wellbeing of others.

- Nurse educators can play a pivotal role in educating the students about the importance of cognitive stimulation therapy; thus, the future of the country will be having sufficient knowledge regarding promotion of cognitive functions and they can work as productive members of the society.
- Nursing curriculum should be revised to improve the knowledge of students regarding cognitive stimulation program in improving cognitive functions and strengthening quality of life.
- Seminars, workshops, and conferences must be conducted in nursing institutions to help the students to improve and apply this as one of their behavioral components.

Nursing Administration

- At administrative level nurses can make necessary policy to implement this concept into mental health psychiatric nursing.
- Nurse administrator must encourage their staff members to apply this concept as a behavioral technique to restructure the mental health of elderly under their care.
- Nurse administrators can supervise various training sessions related to the improvement of cognitive functions, not only of the elderly but also for other age groups.

Nursing Research

- Research should be directed for exploring and updating the caregiver knowledge regarding cognitive stimulation programs in the promotion of cognitive functioning of elderly.
- Nursing research should be conducted to prepare various educational materials for mass awareness programs.

- Nursing research should also be conducted on building the quality of life aspects of elderly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from the present research findings: The findings of this research bring forward various following recommendations-

1. Nurses and professionals working in the hospital, old age homes, communities, and in other areas need to be aware of various techniques and activities in cognitive stimulation therapy which can be taught to the elderly and their caregivers.
2. Cognitive stimulation program techniques included in the present study can be taught and rehearsed by the elderly, under the supervision of nurses, trainers, or by some expert.
3. This intervention can also be organized in the form of an individual or one-to-one basis.
4. Dietary modifications and counselling should be planned or can be included as a component for the elderly suffering from moderate to severe cognitive decline.
5. Focus group discussions among elderly for exploring various problems should be more detailed, focused, and organized, to motivate them to express themselves about the issues related to cognitive decline.
6. Regular cognitive stimulation programs should be organized in hospital and community areas.
7. Nurses who are on the administrative position in hospitals and community areas may organize in-service education programs for elderly as a form of a preventive approach.

8. Nurses in the community area can get involved in direct surveillance of the elderly suffering from mild-moderate to severe cognitive decline by conducting regular home visits.
9. Nursing faculties may sensitize as well as guide the nursing students towards prevention of cognitive decline and building up of quality of life through implementation of the CST program.
10. Nurse Led Cognitive Stimulation Program can be recommended and provided in its existing form or by modifying it in various time frames.

Based on outcomes of this study, the following recommendations are suggested for future studies:

1. Comparative research studies can be carried out to compare cognitive stimulation therapy with other therapies for building cognitive functions and quality of life.
2. Research studies on similar training program may be expanded and extended or can be applied to the caregivers of the elderly.
3. Research studies on cognitive stimulation program can be offered to different participants of different ages as well as of different communities.
4. Further investigation is essential to identify which specific variables can contribute to enhanced cognitive functions.
5. The study can be applied to a large number of participants to validate the outcome and to make generalizations about the outcome.
6. Study recommended a sequential explanatory design research with of dual objective, success of implementation and subjective experience of delivering CST.
7. Research can be undertaken by inculcating various other activities and/or by modifying the program to obtain specific outcomes.

8. Further studies can be done by utilizing Nurse Led Cognitive Stimulation Program on other different variables.
9. Studies can be undertaken on the effectiveness of cognitive stimulation therapy by combining it with other therapies.
10. Descriptive studies can be done to assess various coping strategies adopted by elderly and their caregivers while facing the issues related to the cognitive decline.
11. Qualitative studies can be done on the experiences of elderly undergoing cognitive stimulation program.

Summary: This chapter incorporated the conclusion, implications of the study, recommendations from the present research findings and recommendations for future research.