

## **THE ELDERLY AND THEIR LIFE PROJECTS: LITERATURE REVIEW**

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**Abstract:** With the increase in the elderly population, some measures need to be taken to ensure that they have quality of life and thus can continue to be part of society as active individuals. Innovations in care, health and leisure service platforms, allow you to continue with your projects, plans and dreams without losing the spark of living new experiences. We sought to identify the personal life projects of the elderly in different spaces of time. This is a literature review. Performed in the databases: Scielo (Scientific Electronic Library Online), LILACS (Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences) and Pubmed (US National Library of Medicine), in Portuguese, English and Spanish. It resulted in 12 selected articles. The elderly who attend community centers are mostly women and these, since antiquity, have shown to be more careful with their health, their physical, psychological and emotional well-being. There is a need to attract elderly men to social movements, transform their routines, share memories, recreate new memories, create interpersonal bonds, perform physical activities, encourage cognitive stimuli with activities of cultivation, reading, among others, contributing so that they can have quality of life. The elderly population can be characterized into two groups: elderly people who would like to enjoy new events and those who believe that projects and new goals are for young people. Taking into account all these aspects, that aging is something natural and unique, varying from person to person, that life projects can exist more briefly, in a short or long period of time, being an individual choice and that depends on factors external factors, it is important that quality of life is offered and that investments are provided so that the elderly can continue actively to achieve personal, family and social goals.

**Keywords:** Aging, quality of life, elderly.

## INTRODUCTION

The world's elderly population will reach an estimated 2.1 billion people over 60 years of age by the year 2050, this number of people will exceed the number of adults and also young people under the age of 24 (Nacional Pesquisa por Amostra de Households, 2018). With this significant increase in the number of elderly people, changes in the epidemiological panorama are developed, since there is an increase in Noncommunicable Diseases and Injuries (DANT), given that advanced age involves chronic degenerative diseases and these, in turn, are one of the main cause of hospitalizations and deaths (DANTAS, 2017).

The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), in 2019, published that the expectation of the Brazilian population became, on average, 76.6 years, presenting a progress of three months in relation to the year 2018 and that men passed to manifest a life expectancy of 73.1 years and women reached 80.1 years. For this life expectancy to be extended, some factors were crucial for this, such as, for example, a decrease in the fertility rate, infant mortality and, through advances in science and better social conditions being developed over the years, may contribute to that thus life expectancy was high (MIRANDA, 2016).

The increase in the world's elderly population has aroused the interest of society to seek to understand the consequences of situations and possible adjustments that the social body may have to make, innovations and improvement in various areas will have to occur (BELASCO, 2019). In addition to social changes being necessary, aging brings changes for the elderly individual in relation to his family, work and the community where he is inserted, being a challenge for him as it requires a new adaptation to his reality (CASTILHO, 2020).

The transformation with this number of

elderly people will generate a social impact in all sectors, namely: social security, health services, education, security, transport and it will be necessary for innovations to occur in the areas of technologies, methods and protocols of care and care for the elderly, professional training, investments in infrastructure to provide adequate assistance platforms for these individuals (KANSO, 2016).

Aging can be established as a natural, gradual and immutable process, which is part of the life of all living beings, some with a longer or shorter period of life, this process can be influenced by socioeconomic, political, psychological and cultural factors (MESQUITA, 2016). The aging of the population requires adjustments in the political processes of society, whether family, religious or neighborhood, and therefore, an attempt is made to build a new culture offering visibility and positive relevance to these elderly individuals (TOTORA, 2016).

There are people who reach old age in a healthy way, with a good quality of life with few pathologies, controlled levels of stress, adequate self-care and satisfaction with how they are living, on the other hand, some elderly people exhibit some elements that compromise having a quality life, such as examples: elderly people with comorbidities, depressive symptoms, inactivity, fatigue (GARBACCIO, 2018).

This new phase of life, aging, is made up of several successive losses, such as losing youth, sometimes losing health and autonomy, obtaining multiple physical limitations, and for many it is not an easy stage to live (RIBEIRO, 2017).

Quality of life presents a comprehensive concept and is directly related to social, mental, spiritual, physical aspects and can determine the impact of illnesses on an individual's life (GUERRA, 2017). Through healthy aging, the elderly person aims to experience new

experiences, feeling able to execute, decide on their choices, keeping themselves in balance even with limitations (ROCHA TUMA, 2019).

So that the elderly individual has a better quality of life, and can live longer and better, being able to project new facets in his life, aiming to obtain experiences of leisure and well-being, it is necessary that different areas are carried out, such as, for example: practicing physical activities, having family support, relating to other people, maintaining their autonomy, continuing with the psychological domain and self-esteem (OKUNO, 2020).

Inserting the elderly person into society is essential for aging to become something natural as it actually is, with no room for discrimination to make them an incapable, fragile and defenseless person, without expectations, but rather a person who longs to explore new opportunities and conquer new spaces. With this, it is necessary to develop new actions, programs aimed at improving the quality of life of the active elderly within the community (SOUZA, 2020).

## METHODOLOGY

The electronic databases used: Scielo (Scientific Electronic Litronic Library Online), LILACS (Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences) and Pubmed (US National Library of Medicine), the selected articles were published between 2016 and 2020. We found: Scielo: 32 articles; LILACS: 609 articles and Pubmed: 32 articles. For the research, the descriptors (DeCs) were used: aging, quality of life and elderly, in national and international magazines, in Portuguese, Spanish and English. The Boolean AND was used. The following descriptions were crossed: aging (DECs) AND quality of life (DeCs) AND elderly (DeCs). As inclusion criteria: original articles, available in full, free of charge, in addition to the selected languages and period. As exclusion criteria,

it was decided not to use theses, dissertations and monographs or those that did not present the thematic subject of this review in the title or abstract. Article selections were divided into three stages based on the descriptors: 1st Stage: the selection was carried out by reading the titles (568 were excluded); 2nd Stage: reading of abstracts (excluded 315) and 3rd Stage: reading in full (excluded 99). In relation to duplicate articles in different electronic databases, they were only discarded after reading them in full (10 articles), in order to avoid exclusion errors. 12 articles were worked on in the review.

## RESULT

A study carried out in a Reference Center for the Elderly, located in the city of Belo Horizonte-Minas Gerais, verified the quality of life of the elderly and their contributors, 200 elderly people of both sexes participated in this study, obtained three main factors, the physical, psychological, social relations, 77.8% of the elderly believed they had a good or very good quality of life, 3.1% as poor or very poor, with this they arrived at an analysis that those elderly people had a good quality of life in most cases. life in community centers (MIRANDA, 2016).

Through coexistence centers, the elderly enjoy fundamental activities to improve their health and social condition, they participate together with other people of similar age and a team of professionals, from multiple trades such as practicing physical exercises, conversation circles, dancing and reading, all being to cooperate in well-being (LIMA, 2019).

The difference between men and women who attend community centers is significant, since women have since ancient times shown to be more careful and zealous for their bodies, their health, and their interpersonal relationships than men. A study states that in

community centers for the elderly, the female figure is more present, and it may be that men, after their retirement, feel difficult to adhere to new actions, whether social, educational or cultural (PEREIRA, 2016).

Community centers for the elderly are an important tool to continue keeping the elderly active in the social circle, providing new opportunities and their life projects in the short, medium and long term, with different options and that can be implemented. (MINISTRY OF HEALTH, 2006).

It is important to emphasize that aging can lead to multiple disabilities, making the individual dependent on carrying out their day-to-day activities, this functional decline can usually be associated with chronic pathologies and the elderly will need help from other people. (SCOLARI, 2020). At this moment, actions, programs, training for professionals must be designed and implemented to provide the necessary assistance to this population.

## DISCUSSION

Some seniors believe that life projects are levers that drive them to continue living and dreaming, which is something essential and for other seniors it is something aimed at younger people who aspire and have the vigor to conquer new events in their lives (SANTANA, 2016).

Longevity can present a period of time of difficulties and suffering for some elderly people, being then unable in these circumstances to design plans for themselves, so it is necessary that new projects are aimed at them, in order to encourage, stimulate their autonomy, their choice options with activities to be developed (EWERTON, 2018).

Factors contribute to the quality of life of elderly individuals, a study points out that the main ones are physical activity, food, family support, interpersonal relationships, financial

conditions and this in turn demonstrated that individuals with an income of three minimum wages or more had better quality of life (GATO, 2018).

The elderly are more vulnerable and, linked to their substantially relevant growth, can overload the health system, becoming a challenge for developed and underdeveloped countries, which need to plan, innovate measures that enable health professionals to provide quality care for this population, as well as structurally designing an appropriate platform, be it hospital, outpatient, or community centers with appropriate capacity to provide the best care.

## CONCLUSION

The challenges with the increase in the elderly population are being evidenced over time and measures need to be implemented

to transform these lives that were previously without prospects for the future into positive perspectives and possible to be realized through their life projects with the society working to provide the appropriate ways for this to occur.

Aging itself requires much more than physical and psychological factors, it requires attention and care from society, believing that it is possible to age with health and quality of life, becoming dreamers of our own future, and for that the other responsible areas need to pay attention and invest for this to happen.

Taking care of the elderly and being able to provide possibilities for them to achieve their life projects is to know and understand that we are fighting today for innovations to occur in the field of elderly health, and then to take advantage of these innovations if God allows us to reach this stage of life.

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