

Generative behavior and psychological health among older people in Galle, Sri Lanka

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Depression and cognitive impairments in older people are vital public health issues in Sri Lanka. Stress plays a major role in developing such chronic ill-health conditions in people. Little is known about generative behavior and its effect on psychological well-being of older people in the country. The study aimed at assessing generative behavior, psychological health and possible associations between the two constructs in older people aged 60 years and above in Galle. Seventy seven (77) men and 46 women were surveyed using an interviewer administered questionnaire. Loyola Generatively Scale (LGS) and Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler 10) were used. The average LGS score is 40-41 for the older people in many countries and those who got Kessler 10 score greater than 25 are likely to have moderate or severe mental disorders. The mean scores of the LGS were 48.6 ($SD=7.01$) and 48.7 ($SD=7.08$) for the women and men respectively. The mean scores of the Kessler 10 were 16.7 ($SD=5.81$) and 15.06 ($SD=4.62$) for the women and men respectively. The older people participated in the study were found to be engaged in generative activity behavior more frequently than older people in many other settings. Negative correlation ($r= -0.16$, $p=0.08$) was found between LGS Scores and Kessler 10. Thus, those who were frequently engaged in generative activities were less likely to experience psychological distress. The desires to be generative and generative activities seem to be important behaviors associated with psychological well-being of the older people in Galle, Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Depression, Generative activities, Mental disorders, Psychological well-being, Stress

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