

Neighborhood Environments and Physical Activity in Older Adults

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Response Paper

This article established a relationship between the physical and social environment, which has a prominent influence on the physical activities of older people. The findings of this research are helpful in concluding that the physical and environmental characteristics of a neighbourhood have an impact on the health and attitude of the people. There are many types of research conducted in the area and their effects on the welfare of the people. The research focus was on old adults who are an essential part of our society. Therefore, it is crucial to design a neighbourhood which facilitates them. There is a common belief that physical activity is not necessary for old people, and this is the reason why people become lazy and inactive when they enter adulthood. The low level of activity makes them prone to many chronic diseases. It is a false assumption, and many doctors recommend exercise and a high level of physical activity for old people.

Physical activity is very important for older people; it helps them maintain a healthy body and a strong mind. Socialization and physical activity could significantly minimize the negative impacts of many chronic diseases in older people. Retired people can acquire the required amount of physical activity by walking in the neighbourhood and for recreation (Mahmood et al.). The importance of neighbourhoods can be recognized by the fact that they have a substantive impact on the health and well-being of the people. A healthy neighbourhood has a positive impact on the social life of old people. It is observed that the centre of socialization for the old people is the neighbourhood. Elderly people who socialize more are less likely to develop mental health issues like anxiety and depression. It has been observed that comfort and familiarity with the local area help [older adults](#) develop a sense of control (Oswald et al.).

This article is based on qualitative research in which sixty-six older people from eight different countries participated in collecting photo voice data. The data was then used to highlight the strengths and concerns of the community and to promote discussion and knowledge about essential communal problems through group discussions of photographs. This study emphasized how the physical environment and society play a role in enhancing or hindering the physical activities of older people. The research strategy used for this research was Photovoice. It is a method in which partakers take photographs as a method of data collection. This data is very useful as it also covers the minor details left by the collection of data in a written or oral form.

The primary purpose of this article is to highlight the relationship between the environment and physical condition of the neighbourhood and the health and well-being of old people from the

perspective of old people. Young people always fail to pinpoint the material conditions of the neighbourhood, which can have a negative impact on the well-being of old people. Through this research, seven themes originated: feeling of security, being safe, reaching the destination, comfortable movement, variety of destinations, peer support, community-based programs, and volunteer activities (Mahmood et al.).

The themes that were most photographed and talked about were safety and security. This means that most adult people want safety and security. This theme includes both physical security, like quiet streets, and the psychological scene of security, which is concerned with physical safety. A few issues came to the surface, which made the old people feel unsafe. The next theme related to barriers to assessing different services and facilities was getting there. It was detected that a neighbourhood with transport facilities and nearby shops and stores are most required by the old people.

The way older adults can travel with comfort. Comfort in movement means an absence of physical stoppages like barriers and parking spaces. Old people prefer to have an environment that is comfortable for movement. Public toilets and benches are also essential requirements in a healthy neighbourhood. Peer support helps in the social stability of older adults, and participants of the study were of the view that peer support was a good way of helping people socialize and carry out the study. People engage in more activities when they have peer support, and such people are more healthy and active. Community-based programs should also be present in the neighbourhood. A community garden or a library is an attractive place that is a source of activity and socialization for older people. The last theme discussed in the study is volunteer activities. Older people volunteering in community activities are both physically and socially active (Oswald et al.).

Keeping in view all the themes highlighted in this study, it is essential to have a neighbourhood that has all the facilities required by the older community. These facilities will help the older generation build healthy bodies and personalities. This phenomenon is getting aggregate consideration from several experts and policymakers. It is also important to motivate the old people to take part in social and community services and also to motivate the young generation to make the neighbourhood suitable for them. Although providing a suitable physical environment is a good initiative taken by many policymakers in different countries like the USA, Canada, and Norway, it is also necessary to take steps to improve the quality of air and water so that health can also be adjusted.

Works Cited

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