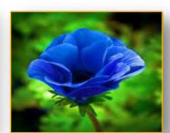
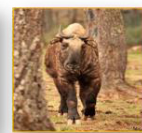


Influence of adverse life experiences on quality of life and well-being among elderly people in Bhutan

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Introduction

A significant amount of research into Quality of Life (QOL) among elderly people has focused on western affluent populations. Determinants of QOL and well-being have not been explored among elderly people in Bhutan. Many Bhutanese elders continue to live traditionally in highly integrated communities where social causes of health and well-being may be different from western societies.

Objectives

Describe:

- 1) Prevalence of common adverse life experiences and common physical and mental disorders;
- 2) Influence of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), stressful life events (SLEs), health conditions, spirituality, social connectedness, and demographic characteristics on QOL.

Methodology: Sequential Exploratory Mixed-Methods

Qualitative interviews: FGDs and IDIs (Digital recording)

Quantitative Survey: Face-to-face interviews



Measurements: WHOACE-IQ, WHOQOL-BREF, WHO 5 Wellbeing Index, SLEs & physical health checklists.

Study Sites



Participants: 391 older adults (aged: 60-101 years)

Results

Qualitative and quantitative survey findings indicated **good quality of life** for most participants. Both distal and proximal stressors were associated with reduced QOL, including adverse childhood experiences (**forced labour and periods of extreme hardship** that occurred five, six or more decades earlier). In multivariate analysis, absence of common **physical and mental health conditions, spirituality, family harmony and high social connectedness** were significant correlates of QOL explaining **64%** of the total variance. Perceived threats reported by the elderly people include rapid modernization, materialism, individualism and family disintegration.

Conclusion

Contribute insights into issues affecting elderly people in Bhutan. May assist development of socially and culturally appropriate interventions to promote health, well-being, and quality of life of elderly people. Inform policy makers about the probable effects of adverse life experiences, especially the adverse childhood experiences that appear to have long lasting influence into later adulthood.