

Self-care capacity of portuguese elderly residents in home context


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Abstract

Introduction

In Portugal, the recorded aging rate in 2020 was 167%, with the percentage of people over 65 years old being the fourth highest in the European Union¹. At this stage of life, health needs undergo continuous changes resulting from the aging process and/or disease situations, and there may be higher levels of self-care deficit. In this sense, it is essential to interpret the person's abilities to take care of himself and maintain health, with the focus being placed on the human power activated and evidenced by the person when he investigates, judges, makes decisions and produces self-care operations². Considering this perspective, an adequate and effective support system for the development of the capacity for self-care becomes essential, emerging for this, the understanding of the capacity of the elderly to develop self-care.

Objective

To identify variables that interfere with the Self-Care Capacity of the elderly residing in the home context.

Method

Non-experimental, cross-sectional, quantitative, descriptive and correlational study, with a favorable opinion from the Ethics Committee ARSLVT (Proc.086/CES/INV/2018) with a sample consisting of 400 elderly people, aged between 65 and 97 years old, living in a home context. The assessment of self-care capacity was carried out by mobilizing the Exercise of Self-Care Agency – ESCA by Kearney & Fleischer³ revised by Riesch & Hauck⁴ after a process of translation, cultural adaptation and validation into Portuguese by the authors. Instrument consisting of four domains: Self-concept, Initiative and Responsibility, Knowledge and Information Research and Passivity.

Results

There is a positive correlation between age and the domain Initiative and responsibility (3.6%) and a negative correlation with the domain Knowledge and information seeking (3.7%). Thus, the greater the age of the elderly person, the greater the Initiative and responsibility for self-care and, on the other hand, the greater the age, the lower the level of Knowledge and information seeking. In global terms, a progressive increase in schooling accompanied an increase in the level of Knowledge and information seeking. Regarding self-perception of health status, univariate tests indicate the existence of statistically significant differences in the dimensions of Self-concept, Knowledge and information seeking and Passivity (inverted). It was observed that the elderly people who report being unable to perform usual self-care activities, requiring help from others, exhibit lower scores in these domains, compared to those who are able to take care of themselves despite the disease and those who report feeling healthy.

Conclusions

The elderly people, with lower levels of education and inability to take care of themselves, present lower weights in the dimensions of Self-care capacity, therefore, nurses must consi-

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der multiple strategies so that these people can access, understand, interpret, and integrate information content that allows them to take care of themselves. In experiencing situations of incapacity to take care of oneself, the promotion of self-concept is also one of the relevant dimensions for self-care capacity.

Keywords

Aging; Self-care capacity; Self-perception of health status.

References

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