

Effectiveness of Tai Chi Exercise on Elderly Depression and Self Esteem

Chinju Raj

Aging is the natural process that begins with conception, but in practice, it is regarded as the phase in life when body functions begin to decline. It is reported that institutionalised elderly were found to have increased feeling of loneliness, stress, depression, low self esteem and hopelessness. Tai –chi exercise is a slow graceful Chinese exercise that enhances relaxation skills, mental focus and physical alignment while building leg strength, endurance and stability. The martial arts of Tai chi can relieve depression and boost self esteem.

Need and Significance of the Study

Population aging is the process by which older individuals become a proportionally larger share of the total population. It has been one of the most distinctive demographic events in the twentieth century. India is presently undergoing such a demographic transition with 72 million elderly persons above 60 years of age, which is expected to increase to 179 million in 2031 and further to 301 million in 2051. During the aging process, changes experienced by the elderly, such as possible loss of a spouse, financial difficulties, lack of familiar and social support and occurrence of co-morbidities may frequently contribute to psychological imbalances, especially depression. Incidence of depression and poor self-esteem are the major problems in old age which has a strong relation with each other (WHO, 2013). The martial art of Tai chi can relieve depression and boost self esteem, it is designed to promote relaxation and improve balance, strength and psychological wellbeing. A growing number of studies support the positive impact of Tai chi on many aspects of psychological wellbeing. This motivated the researcher to undertake this study.

Statement of the Problem: A study to assess the effectiveness of tai chi exercise on depression and self- esteem among the depressed elderly in selected old age home, Coimbatore (TN).

Objectives

This study was conducted with following objectives.

- To assess the level of depression and self esteem among the depressed elderly in experimental

The author is Lecturer, Jubilee Mission College of Nursing, Thrissur, (Kerala).

Guide: Prof. Tamilselvi

and control group.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of Tai chi exercise on the level of depression and self esteem among depressed elderly in experimental group.
- To compare the level of depression and self-esteem among the depressed elderly between the experimental and control group.
- To correlate the level of depression and self esteem in the experimental group.
- To associate the findings with selected demographic variables.

Review of Literature

A correlational study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of Tai chi exercise on self esteem and perceived life expectancy among the elderly. A non-probability sample of 86 were selected as the sample and 10 item Rosenberg's Self esteem Scale were administered to assess level of self esteem. The results revealed that the Tai-chi exercise enhanced greater self-esteem and greater perceived life expectancy and all the variables are related each other (Jose.Moral. De.La Rubia, 2014).

A study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of Tai chi exercise on elderly Chinese-Americans. Thirty-nine elderly with major depression were randomised as the study sample. The subjects were assessed by the 17-item Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression. Tai-chi exercise was given for 12 weeks as 2 sessions weekly. The post-test scores and results revealed that there is positive treatment response on the level of depression among the elderly people (Yeung A, 2012).

Methodology

The researcher adopted experimental research design. The study had two groups, experimental group and control group.

The research design adopted is depicted in Table .

Table : Research design adopted for the study

Experimental group	Pre-test	Taichi exercise	Post-test
	O ₁	X	O ₂
Control group	Pre-test		Post-test
	O ₁	-	O ₂

Method of Data Collection

After establishing good rapport, screening test was conducted using Geriatric Depression Scale and Modified Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale and a sample of 40 depressed elderly were selected by using the simple random sampling technique. The researcher randomly assigned 20 subjects in the experimental group and 20 subjects in the control group. The demographic data were collected from each subject using demographic profile.

Tai chi exercise was given to the experimental group as morning session for four weeks. Post-test was conducted on the 30 th day by using the same tool to both groups to know the effectiveness of tai chi on the level of depression and self-esteem among the depressed elderly (Figs 1-3).

Results

Table 1 shows that the calculated value of 't' is greater than the tabulated value of 't' at 5 percent level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is

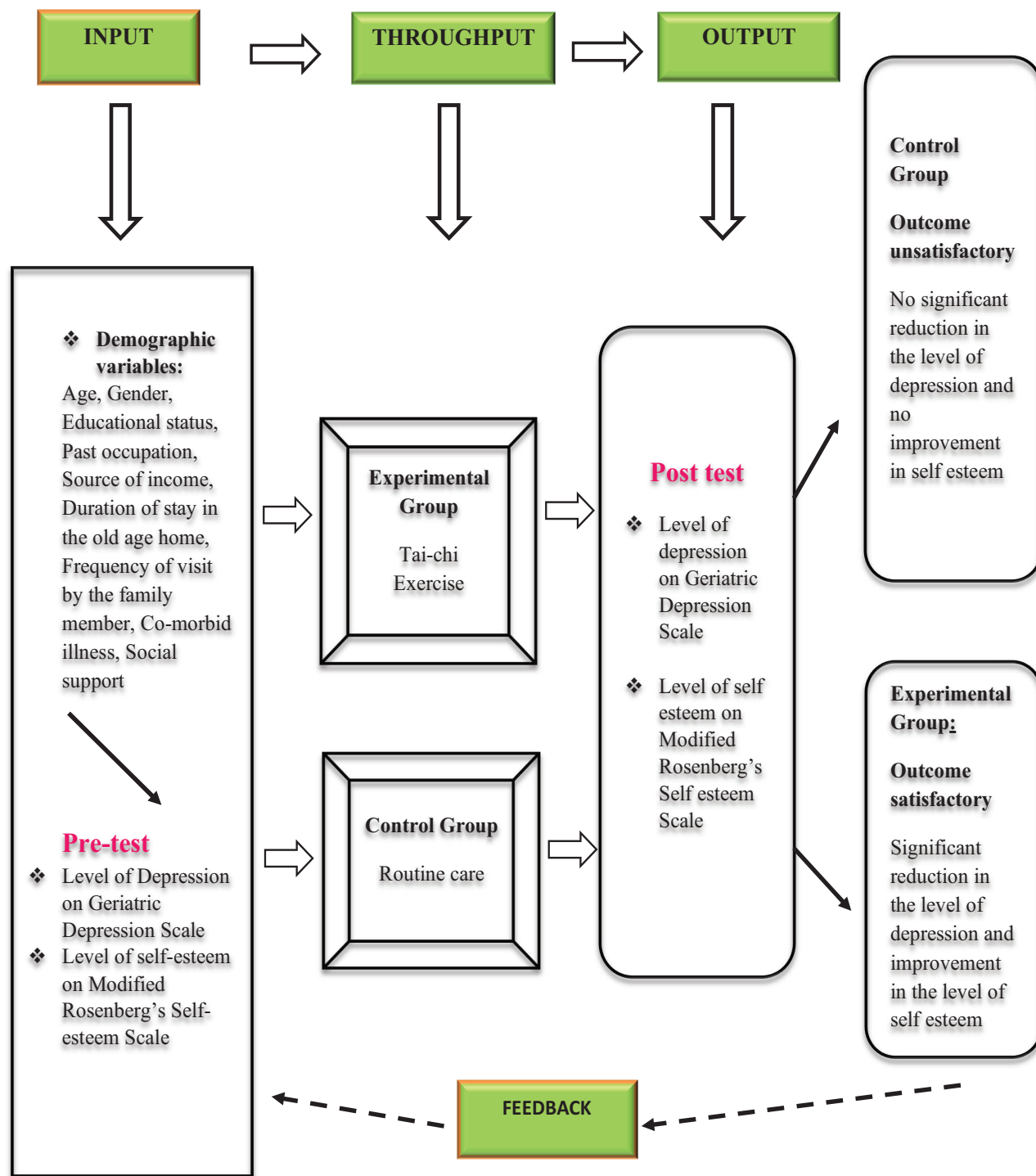


Fig 1: Conceptual framework based on modified JW Kennys open system model

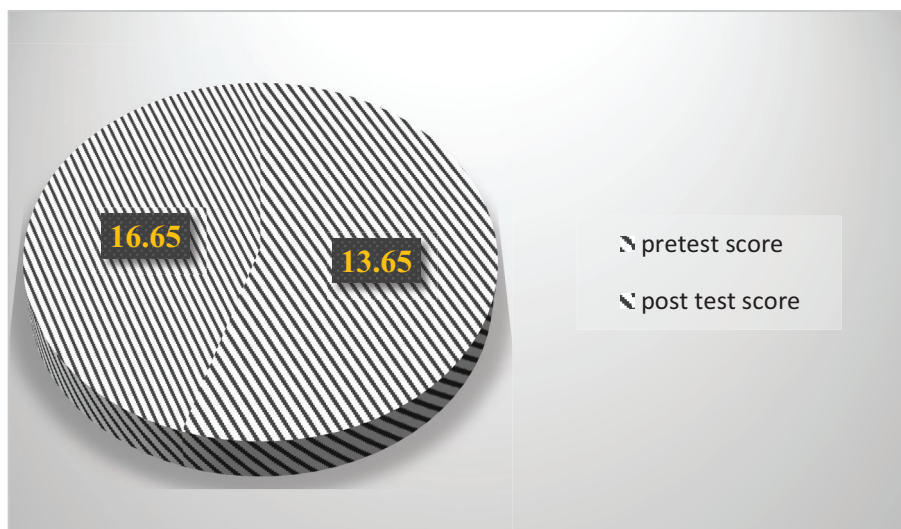


Fig 2: Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of depression among depressed elderly.

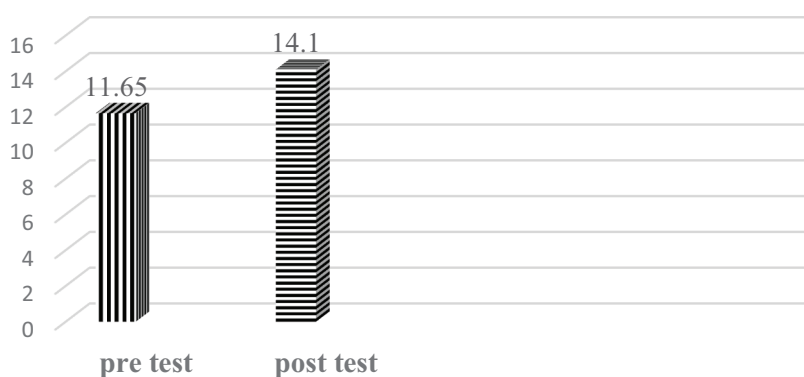


Fig 3: Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of self-esteem among depressed elderly.

Table 1: Comparison of post-test scores of depression and self-esteem among the depressed elderly between the experimental and control group.

No	Variables	Group	Mean	Standard deviation	Calculated value of 't'	Tabulated value of 't' at 5% level of significance
1	Depression	Experimental group	13.65	3.71	8.1	1.96
		Control group	14.6	3.64		
2	Self esteem	Experimental group	14.1	3.1	2.09	1.96
		Control group	10.5	1.78		

rejected. There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post test scores of depression and self-esteem among the depressed elderly in experimental group. The result revealed that the Tai chi exercise is very effective in reducing depression and improving self-esteem among the depressed elderly.

Nursing Implications

The investigator has drawn the following implications from the study, which are of vital significance for nursing practice, nursing education, nursing administration and nursing research.

Nursing Practice: Tai chi can be developed as a routine exercise to reduce geriatric depression and to improve self-esteem in the geriatric units. Nurses can implement Tai chi exercise as an adjunct in depressive patients to reduce the level of depression.

Nursing Education: The nursing students should be offered short term training for the Tai chi exercise programme. Seminars, conferences, workshops can be arranged for the nurses regarding the importance of complementary therapies that can be applied to the various disease conditions.

Nursing Administration: The present study is proposed to help the health administrators to strategically plan and meet the health needs of the elderly.

Nursing Research: This study is the preliminary set up and guidance to explore the benefits of Tai chi in geriatric depression and improving self-esteem in the depressed elderly.

Recommendations

The study recommended the following for the future researcher.

- The similar study can be undertaken on a larger sample for better generalisation.
- The similar study can be conducted in a clinical setting like geriatric wards.

Conclusion

In the light of study analysis and findings, the study concludes that tai chi exercise is effective in reducing depression and improving self-esteem among the depressed elderly residing in old age homes.

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