

# Promoting Mental Wellbeing in Elderly with Parkinson's Disease: A Holistic Approach

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## Abstract

**Background:** Parkinson's disease is distinguished by ailments such as shaking hands, difficulties with walking, instability, depressive disorders, anxiety, and diarrhea. PD Patients belonging to the middle class and below exhibited the greatest prevalence of Parkinson's disease, accounting for 40% of the cases. It is likely to be more common among those in the middle socioeconomic class.

**Aim:** The objective is to gather the existing empirical data regarding the influence on mental wellness in older adults afflicted by Parkinson's disease.

**Methods and Materials:** Data was collected from additional resources such as search engines and databases, specifically Scopus, PubMed Central, Google Scholar, ProQuest, and JSTOR were consulted.

**Results and Conclusions:** Furthermore, the complexity and severe negative consequences may differ, although the impacted persons are able to adapt to both the physical and non-physical symptoms. In order to improve the health and well-being of senior individuals affected by Parkinson's disease, it is important for mental health specialists, neurologists, healthcare workers, caregivers, and family members to collaborate as a group.

**Keyword:** Parkinson's Disease, therapies, Elderly, Psychological wellbeing, mental health.

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## INTRODUCTION

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a long-term degenerative ailment of the nervous system that occurs due to the breakdown of the dopaminergic system in the nigrostriatal pathway. (Dauer & Przedborski, 2003) This syndrome is neurologically destructive and is defined by symptoms that affect motor function, including Bradykinesia, stiffness, tremors, and difficulty with balance while walking. It also causes a variety of non-motor difficulties,



such as memory problems, psychological disorders, pain, and numerous sensory issues.

Typically, this condition primarily impacts older persons at a rate of 1.9% and the elderly at a rate of 2.6%. as per the statistics of the Indian Council of Medical Research, (2020). According to the 2019 data, Parkinson's disease has impacted over 8.5 million individuals globally. The global incidence of the condition has increased twice over the past 25 years, resulting in over five million lifetime years adjusted for disability. (World Health Organization, 2022).

The prevalence of neurological illnesses has increased two times from 1990 to 2019 accounting for 1.8% of the overall burden of illnesses related to the brain. (ICMR – Press release, 2021) In addition to the well-known motor indicators such as tremors and stiffness, it is often presented with a diverse array of non-motor symptoms, including cognitive decline, anxiousness, depressive disorders, and sleep disturbances. (Aarsland *et al.*, 2023) These signs can greatly diminish one's quality of life and necessitate extensive management strategies that address both mental and physical well-being. (Baumbach *et al.*, 2015)

## METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this article is to collect recent empirical data on the relationship between wellness and aging, specifically in relation to treatments. The various platforms and databases used were Google Scholar, Jstor, ProQuest, PubMed Central, and Scopus. It focused on various aspects related to Parkinson's patients, including psychological well-being, quality of life, routine tasks, memory loss, interaction with others, and peer support. This study utilized an aggregate of 33 papers. Duplicates were eliminated and articles were chosen based on their whole text and content. Articles that lack relevancy are eliminated. The studies deliberately incorporated the aforementioned themes and characteristics.

### *Mental Health of Parkinson's Patients*

Mental health issues significantly contribute to the occurrence of physical ailments in older adults. Additionally, it results in impairment in individuals with Parkinson's disease. (Gallagher *et al.*, 2010) A significant proportion of individuals aged 60 and above experience the impact of the disorder. People who are diagnosed with the illness are susceptible to signs of despair and

nervousness upon receiving their diagnosis. (Yazd *et al.*, 2023) The emphasis of the mental well-being of these patients is crucial. There is a relative lack of research on mental health in comparison to physiological health and mobility issues. Ageism may result from the perpetuation of age-related misconceptions and negative stereotypes. (Cavanaugh & Blanchard-Fields, 2002)

When examining mental health concerns among the elderly, it is crucial to take into account several aspects such as socio-cultural background, race, ethnic background, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, handicap status, and whether they live in a rural or urban location.

### *Quality of Life*

Mental well-being is a vital component of a high quality of life in patients with Parkinson's disease. Anxiety, feeling depressed, apathy, and diminished quality of life usually occur simultaneously and possess a reciprocal effect on one another. (Kuhlman *et al.*, 2016) Prompt detection of illness and effective control of motor indications greatly improve the patient's quality of life. The management of symptoms is accompanied by involuntary motion, necessitates periodic modifications, and requires the expert administration of drugs.

(Kulisevsky, 2022) Movement complications, including slow movements, stiffness, shaking hands, and unstable posture, are fundamental features that can greatly impede mobility and independence, ultimately affecting one's overall quality of life. (Fereshtehnejad *et al.*, 2015) As the illness progresses, these signs tend to evolve into more prominent, leading to increased impairment and limitations in functionality. Motor impairments resulting from medication can significantly disrupt patients' everyday activities and quality of life. (Radder *et al.*, 2016)

Symptoms that are not related to movement, such as memory loss, autonomic dysfunction, and sleep disturbances, contribute to the overall impact of Parkinson's illness and negatively affect the individual's quality of life. (Martinez-Martin *et al.*, 2015) These symptoms are frequently not acknowledged or addressed adequately, which worsens patients' distress and diminishes their quality of life. The effectiveness of treatment greatly impacts the quality of life in Parkinson's disease patients. Although drugs like levodopa and dopamine agonists might offer immediate relief and enhance functionality, they may lead to long-term issues such as motor fluctuations

and dyskinesias, reducing the effectiveness of treatment and quality of life. (Stocchi *et al.*, 2018) Moreover, surgical interventions such as deep brain stimulation (DBS) have demonstrated efficacy in addressing motor impairments in advanced Parkinson's disease, thereby enhancing degree of living. (Weaver *et al.*, 2020)

### *Activities of Daily Living*

The combination of virtual reality (VR) and motor imagery (MI) with conventional physical therapy (PT) resulted in substantial changes in movement coordination and tasks of everyday life, compared to physical therapy (PT) individually. (Kashif *et al.*, 2022) Research has demonstrated that individuals with Parkinson's disease (PD) observe enhanced motor symptoms, decreased reliance on medication, a higher standard of life, and increased autonomy in routine tasks when undergoing deep brain stimulation (DBS) treatment. (Malek, 2019)

Significant discrepancies were observed in activities pertaining to daily functioning and motor assessments, with the exception of intellectual capacities, behaviour, and emotional well-being. (De La Cruz, 2017) A Recent research suggests that the task-oriented Lee Silverman Voice Treatment-BIG (LSVT-BIG) program, which allows respondents to choose their tasks, may effectively improve hand functionality, performing everyday tasks, psychological health, and degree of living in individuals with Parkinson's disease. (Choi & Kim, 2022) Developing nutritional interventions for individuals with Parkinson's disease, using the Regulating Nutritional Condition score to boost their daily functioning. (Nagano *et al.*, 2021)

### *Cognitive Decline*

Memory impairment is a prevalent non-motor manifestation in individuals with the neurological condition. Parkinson's disease dementia (PDD) may cause more difficulties for patients and their caregivers compared to the usual motor problems related to Parkinson's disease. (Lawson *et al.*, 2016) Crucially, changes in thinking abilities were not limited to one specific area of cognition, and an earlier diagnosis suggests a progressive and varied deterioration in mental functioning in individuals with Parkinson's disease. The experiment conducted by Broeders and colleagues revealed that the linguistic and visual-spatial regions experienced the most notable impact over a period of five years. (Broeders *et al.*, 2013) Involuntary articulation and naming difficulties have received scant study attention, but they

have been linked to cognitive impairment. (Ash *et al.*, 2017) Extensive research involving a large group of individuals and thorough assessments of cognitive abilities across each domain are necessary to enhance our understanding of the typical development of cognitive function. Reports should include both preliminary and subsequent information to enable researchers to evaluate the progression of cognitive abilities across time. (Roheger *et al.*, 2018) Emphasizing particular symptoms during the initial phases of Parkinson's disease is of utmost importance, rather than relying on the patient to voluntarily report them. (Ding *et al.*, 2015) Furthermore, within the context of neuropsychiatric symptoms, cognitive impairment, apathy, grief, nervousness, and difficulties in control of impulses are usually recognized as the most prevalent conditions in Parkinson's disease. (Weintraub *et al.*, 2022) Recent research have reported that neuropsychiatric symptoms have an adverse effect on the thinking skills of individuals. (Jones *et al.*, 2019)

### *Social Interaction*

Social engagement is crucial for improving and promoting the overall well-being of an individual. Effective communication plays a crucial role in social relationships, but individuals with Parkinson's disease may experience limited social interactions due to memory decline and speech impairments. (Sapir *et al.*, 2011) However, social instability manifests in people who receive a diagnosis prior to the early onset of illness. (Porcelli *et al.*, 2019). Research suggests that the condition has a significant influence on interpersonal functioning, leading to reduced overall enjoyment and quality of life. This includes negative effects on spouse interactions, friendship roles, and job roles. (Perepezko *et al.*, 2019). The correlation between social role and the level of existence linked to health is evident. (Van Uem *et al.*, 2016), Furthermore, it has been discovered that face masking is associated with social functioning difficulties such as social rejection. However, it should be noted that these associations and occurrences are diminished when taking depression into consideration. (Gunnery *et al.*, 2016) Individuals with this illness report reduced social interaction and emphasize the importance of maintaining an active and meaningful life in order to achieve contentment. (Dauwerse *et al.*, 2014). The Chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP) frequently impairs interpersonal relationships and disrupts nocturnal sleep, leading to a substantial decline in Wellness. (Englezou *et al.*, 2023)

## Social Support

Seeking social assistance from loved ones, friends, and close relations is crucial for enhancing one's life and overall well-being. It is widely recognized that a decrease in social support might result in the development of depressed symptoms. (Northcott *et al.*, 2016). It is essential to address the burden faced by care takers, as unofficial care givers play an important role in safeguarding the welfare of individuals with PD, which involves making significant sacrifices in terms of finances, social life, and personal well-being. Failing to acknowledge and address the strain experienced by caregivers may lead to exhaustion and the premature placement of individuals with Parkinson's disease into institutional care. (Mosley *et al.*, 2017) Several data's indicate that PD patients who do not seek care and support from their families have a greater chance of experiencing anxiety and depressed symptoms. (Shao *et al.*, 2020) there is also a positive impact among the Parkinson's disease affected elderly patients who seeks social support based on the age, the younger group seek more support than the older group. It might vary based on gender, severity of the disease, disease duration and intensity of the Parkinson's disease. (Saeedian *et al.*, 2014)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The impact of Parkinson's disease on an individual's mental health and aging is significant and unavoidable. Parkinson's disease (PD) is a neurodegenerative condition that impacts both the motor and nonmotor processes of the brain. Parkinson's disease (PD) is more prevalent among elderly individuals, and advancing age is the primary determinant for the occurrence and advancement of PD. Ageing impacts numerous biological processes that make individuals more susceptible to neurodegeneration, including oxidative stress, mitochondrial failure, inflammation, and protein aggregation.

An important obstacle faced by individuals with Parkinson's disease (PD) is the significant influence of mental well-being on both the patients' and their caregivers' overall quality of life. Parkinson's disease (PD) can result in a range of neuropsychiatric symptoms, including sadness, anxiety, apathy, impulse control difficulties, and psychosis. These symptoms can manifest at any phase of the illness and frequently remain unnoticed and untreated. Additionally, PD medicines, sleep difficulties,

exhaustion, and various other circumstances might also exert an affect on them.

Psychological well-being is a crucial component of one's total well-being, and it is imperative to seek assistance if the cognitive and emotional symptoms disrupt typical functioning. Various approaches can be used to manage mental health problems in Parkinson's disease (PD), including counseling, making lifestyle modifications, altering PD drugs, or introducing additional treatments. Customized mental health care should be provided, taking into account the specific requirements and preferences of each individual. This care should involve the active participation of both the patient and their care partner.

## CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, mental health plays a vital role in the overall well-being of individuals with Parkinson's disease (PD), since they confront a range of non-motor symptoms that impact their emotional state, drive, cognitive abilities, and actions. The symptoms might arise from the neurological progression of Parkinson's disease, the adverse effects of Parkinson's disease medication, or the psychological and social consequences of living with a chronic condition. Furthermore, the process of aging might intensify the susceptibility of the brain to Parkinson's disease pathology and deteriorate the clinical outcomes. Hence, it is crucial to evaluate and tackle the mental health requirements of individuals with PD and their caregivers, employing evidence-based therapies that can enhance their overall well-being and functionality. The relationship between mental health and Parkinson's disease is interconnected, necessitating a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to treatment.

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