

A Systematic Review of Quality of Life in Older Adults with Sensory Impairments

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Abstract : Purpose: Sensory impairments are common in older adults. Hearing and visual impairments affect their physical and mental health and quality of life (QOL) adversely. However, systematic reviews of the relationship between hearing impairment, visual impairment, dual sensory impairment and quality of life are scarce. The purpose of this systematic review was to determine the relationship between hearing impairment, visual impairment, dual sensory impairment and quality of life. Methods: Searches of EMBASE, PubMed, CINAHL, MEDLINE, Cochrane Library and Airiti Library were conducted between January 2006 and December 2017 using the keywords 'quality of life,' 'life satisfaction,' 'well-being,' 'hearing impairment' and 'visual impairment' Two authors independently assessed methodologic quality using a modified Downs and Black tool. Data were extracted by the first author and then cross-checked by the second author. Results: Twenty-three studies consisting mostly of community-dwelling older adults were included in our review. Sensory impairment was found to be in significant association with quality of life, with an increase in hearing impairment or visual impairment severity resulting in a lower quality of life. Quality of life for dual sensory impairment was worse than for hearing impairment or visual impairment individually. Conclusions: A significant association was confirmed between hearing impairment, visual impairment, dual sensory impairment and quality of life. Our review can be used to enhance health care personnel's understanding of sensory impairment in older adults and enable healthcare personnel to actively assess older adults' sensory functions so that they can help alleviate the negative impact of sensory impairments on QOL in older adults.

Keywords : nursing, older adults, quality of life, systematic review, hearing impairment, visual impairment

Conference Title : ICN 2018 : International Conference on Nursing

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : September 27-28, 2018