



ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SEXUAL SATISFACTION AND SELF-RATED HEALTH AMONG MARRIED OLDER PERSONS

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Research Highlights

This study revealed the prevalence of married older persons experienced physical contact satisfaction was 73.4% while 59.6% of them also reported emotionally satisfied with their sexual life. This study also provided evidence of both physical contact and emotional sexual satisfaction were higher in respondents with good self-rated health compared to respondents with fair health status. The findings indicated physical contact sexual satisfaction is significantly associated with self-rated health among married older persons. The findings from this study highlighted the important of having satisfaction from sexual activity with partner to improve health in later life.

Research Objectives

World Health Organization define sexuality as vital part of being a human (World Health Organization, 2006). Researches have shown sexual satisfaction significantly influenced health (Lindau et al., 2007; Halimatus S. Minhat, Mat Din, Hamid, & Hassan Nudin, 2019). Study among men and women older adults in United Kingdom reported that sexual satisfaction were significantly reduce among poor self-rated health status compared to respondents who reported good health (Field et al., 2013). The evidence and information on how sexual satisfaction health in older ages is still lacking, especially in Malaysia (Halimatus S. Minhat, Mat Din, Vasudevan, Raja Adnan, & Ibrahim, 2019). Malaysia is experiencing rapid population aging. As fertility is declining and increasing life expectancy, older adults population will continue to increase for the next decade. Considering this situation, the focus should be on improving health of older persons and sexuality is one of potential predictors of better health among older persons (Halimatus S. Minhat et al., 2019). Thus, study aimed to examine the association between sexual satisfaction and self-rated health among married older persons in Malaysia.

Methodology

Data of this study was collected through a cross-sectional study conducted in Kuala Lumpur from December 2014 to February 2015. Twelve community associations were selected for the data collection. No sampling method was used as all available respondents were recruited in this study. The inclusion criteria for this study were i) community-dwelling Malaysian older adults aged 60 and above, ii) currently married and iii) able to understand and response orally the question asked. A face to face interview was conducted by trained enumerator consisted of four sections; sociodemographic, chronic medical conditions, depressive symptoms (using geriatric depression scale), sexual satisfaction (physical contact and emotional satisfaction) and self-rated health. A 3-step hierarchical logistic regression model was conducted to examine the effect of sexual satisfaction on perceived health status after confounders were controlled.

Results

A total of 109 married community-dwelling Malay older adults were recruited with average age of the respondents was 63.23 years old. Male respondents contribute to 64.2% of the respondents recruited. Respondents in this study had average of 7.07 years of formal education. 53.2% of the respondents had household income between RM1001 to RM2500 and 50.5% of them were never





smoked. Results of bivariate associations between showed significant association between self-rated health and age ($t = 2.74$, $P = 0.007$), gender ($\chi^2 = 4.89$, $P = 0.027$), household income ($\chi^2 = 8.66$, $P = 0.011$), chronic medical conditions ($t = 6.09$, $P < 0.001$), depressive symptom ($\chi^2 = 23.08$, $P < 0.001$) and physical contact satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 26.08$, $P < 0.001$). The multivariate model revealed physical contact satisfaction was significantly associated with perceived health status after controlling for other confounders. On the other hand, emotional satisfaction was found not significant in the model.

Findings

This study revealed the prevalence of married older adults having physical contact satisfaction was 73.4%. and 59.6% adults in this study also reported having satisfied emotional sexual satisfaction. Majority of those having satisfied sexual activity were respondents with good self-rated health. Physical contact satisfaction improved self-rated health among the married older persons.

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