

How COVID-19 Impacted Quality of Life Among Older Adults Receiving Home-Delivered Meals: An Interprofessional Examination

Introduction

During COVID-19:

- The percentage of food-insecure older adults rose from 7-25% (Blancato & Whitmire, 2021)
- Social distancing worsened isolation, emotional health, and food insecurity (Munger et al., 2023)

This study examines the pandemic's effects on wellness across six dimensions: physical, social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and vocational.

Research Questions

1. What is the 3-year retrospective impact of the pandemic on older adults' functional abilities, physical activity, mental health (depression and isolation), life satisfaction, pain experiences, and fall risks?
2. What is older adults' current use of and access to technology, food, and future wellness?

Methods

- 14 older adults participated in phone interviews focused on self-care, social contact, healthcare, chronic pain, technology, religion and spirituality, work experience and current hobbies, neighborhood safety, and HDM recommendations.
- Interviews were conducted in-person or over the phone, with audio recordings and transcriptions utilized for thematic analysis

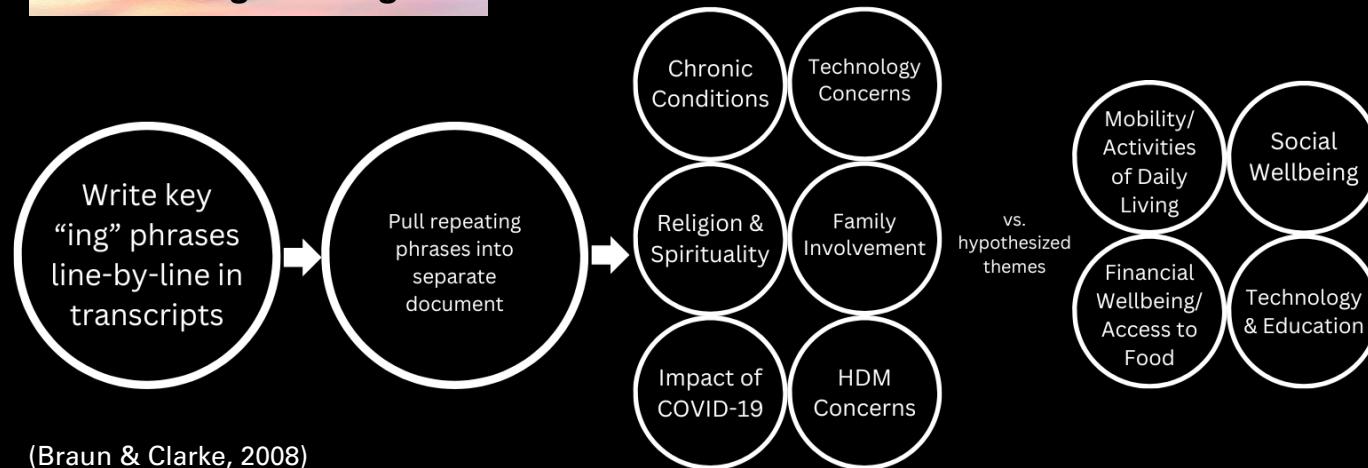
Implications

Negatively impacted by COVID-19:

- Functional abilities, including physical activity
 - Mental health
 - Life satisfaction
 - Access to healthcare
- Technology, Food, Wellness
- Need for accessible, low-cost technology support services
 - Increase in-person interactions with paid and volunteer supports
 - Foster in-person congregate meals to increase social wellbeing

Gerunding/Findings

Themes



(Braun & Clarke, 2008)

References

- Blancato, R. & Whitmire, M. (2021). The crucial role of federal nutrition programs in promoting health among low-income older adults. *Generations Journal*, 45(2), 1-11.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2008, July 21). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>.
- Munger, A.L., Speirs, K.E., Grutzmacher, S.K., & Edwards, M. (2023). Social service providers' perceptions of older adults' food access during COVID-19. *Journal of Aging and Social Policy*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08959420.2023.2205770>.

Sylvia Bright¹, HeeSoon Lee¹, Vivian Miller¹, Chang Seo², & Rebecca Greenwood³ (1Department of Health and Human Services, Bowling Green State University, 2School of Social Work, University of Nevada, Reno, 3School of Health Sciences, University of Charleston, West Virginia)

Funded by the Optimal Aging Institute