

A Cross-sectional Study on Grand-Parenting Activities among Grandparents Who Have Chronic Medical Health Issues Attending a Tertiary Care Hospital in Sri Lanka

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Grandparents are known to be sources of wisdom and authority in grandchildren's lives, regardless of culture. In Sri Lanka, a largely intergenerational society, the practice has always been that grandparents are given a major role in their grandchildren's upbringing by educating them on the norms of the culture. This study aims to understand the experience of grandparents with chronic health conditions by identifying what kind of support these grandparents provide to grandchildren, the frequency in which they do so, describing their perceptions of their caregiving role, and learning how their chronic health condition may affect their grand-parenting experience. Analyses was done on data collected from 355 older adult participants who were grandparents aged 50 years and older with health conditions lasting for a period of at least 6 months at Endocrine, Medical and Surgical clinics in Colombo South Teaching Hospital. Results indicate that grandparents perform caregiving activities on average for 12.43 hours per day and have an overall positive perception of their grand-parenting experience. Only 34.1% of these grandparents live with their grandchildren. Common grand-parenting activities include babysitting, cooking, feeding, playing, vacationing, and giving gifts. Grandparents are satisfied in the upbringing of their grandchildren, and do not feel that they miss opportunities of their own or a change in their health condition due to their caregiving responsibilities. Most grandparents did not believe that their health condition limited their ability to perform activities. There was a small negative association between the number of grand-parenting activities performed and geriatric depression scores ($r=-.122$, $p<.05$), and a small positive association between the number of grand-parenting activities performed and perceived health status ($r=.247$, $p<.01$). Findings suggest that grand-parenting activities are positive experiences for older adults with chronic health conditions.

Key words: *Grand-children, Grand parenting, Sri Lanka*