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A Study to Assess the Prevalence of Dementia among General Public in a Selected Community of Delhi, with a View to Develop an Information Booklet

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to assess the prevalence of dementia among the general public in a selected community of Delhi and to develop an information booklet to enhance awareness regarding the condition. A descriptive survey design with a quantitative research approach was adopted. The study included 400 community people aged 50 years and above, selected through a convenient sampling technique. Data were collected using the standardized Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) tool to determine cognitive function. The findings revealed a noticeable prevalence of mild cognitive impairment among participants, indicating the presence of early dementia symptoms in the community. Awareness levels regarding dementia were found to be low, reinforcing the need for early education and public sensitization. The developed booklet served as an effective educational resource to promote understanding, early detection, and care for individuals at risk of dementia.

KEYWORDS

Dementia, Prevalence, Cognitive Impairment, Community, Awareness, Information Booklet, Delhi

INTRODUCTION

The adult of today becomes Yesterday kids and Tomorrow the old folks. Maturity is a special stage of manhood. Adults as the essential element of any society represent a tremendous asset to a nation. The life expectancy has increased to 62 years as compared to 20 years in the start of the 1900s. India has a significant population size of elderly individuals. The population of the elderly Indians is increasing extremely quickly, thus, the second highest in the world. By 2020, it was estimated that there would be total 230 million, 142, 29 and 27 million older adults in China, India, Indonesia, Brazil and Pakistan respectively thereby forming the largest older adult circles all over the globe. It is estimated that India has more than 4 million patients who have the Alzheimer and other forms of dementia making the country third after China and the US in global patient burden number. It is estimated that the dementia and Alzheimer burden in India will approach nearly 7.5 million by the end of 2030.[1]

Dementia is one of the major health challenges of aging populations globally. It is characterized by a decline in cognitive

function that interferes with daily life and independence. In India, the burden of dementia is steadily rising due to increased life expectancy and changing social structures. According to recent estimates, over 5 million Indians aged 60 and above live with dementia, and this number is expected to double by 2040.[2] Many individuals remain undiagnosed due to social stigma and lack of awareness. In metropolitan regions such as Delhi, where nuclear families and fast-paced lifestyles dominate, elderly members are often left unattended, leading to delayed recognition of dementia symptoms. This study was undertaken to assess the prevalence of dementia among the general public in a selected community of Delhi and to develop an information booklet to improve public understanding and response.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey design with a quantitative approach was employed for the study. The research was conducted among 400 people aged 50 years and above residing in Dichaon Kalan, Najafgarh, Delhi. Convenient sampling was used to recruit participants. Data were collected using the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) tool to evaluate cognitive impairment. Socio-demographic details including age, gender, education, occupation, and family history of dementia were also gathered. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Ethics Committee of St. Stephen's Hospital, and informed consent was taken from all participants.

Table 1: Levels of Cognitive Impairment

vel of Cognitive Impairment	ore Range
rmal Cognition	–30
ld Cognitive Impairment	–25
vere Cognitive Impairment	7

HEALTH BELIEF MODEL

For this study on the prevalence of dementia among the general public in a selected community of Delhi, HBM provides a structured way to assess how people perceive dementia, the risks associated with it, and their willingness to adopt preventive or management strategies.[3]

The model consists of six key components:

1. Perceived Susceptibility – Beliefs about the likelihood of developing dementia.
2. Perceived Severity – Understanding how serious dementia is.
3. Perceived Benefits – Awareness of the benefits of early detection and intervention.
4. Perceived Barriers – Factors that may prevent action, such as stigma or lack of knowledge.
5. Cues to Action – Triggers that prompt people to seek information or care.
6. Self efficacy – Confidence in their ability to take preventive steps or manage the condition.

This framework helps guide the study by analyzing public perceptions of dementia and identifying barriers that may prevent early diagnosis and care.

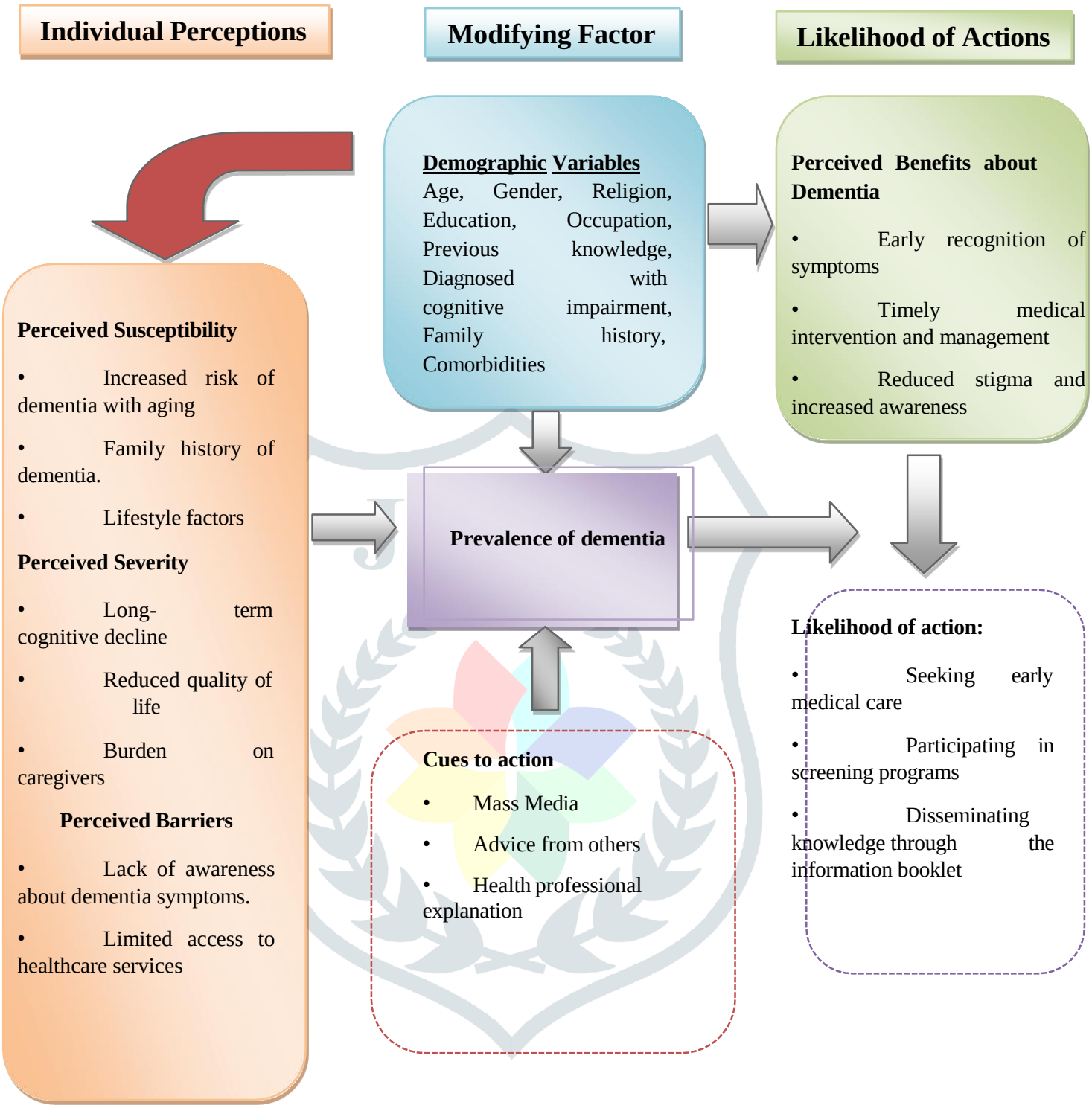

Figure 1. Conceptual framework based on Health Belief Model

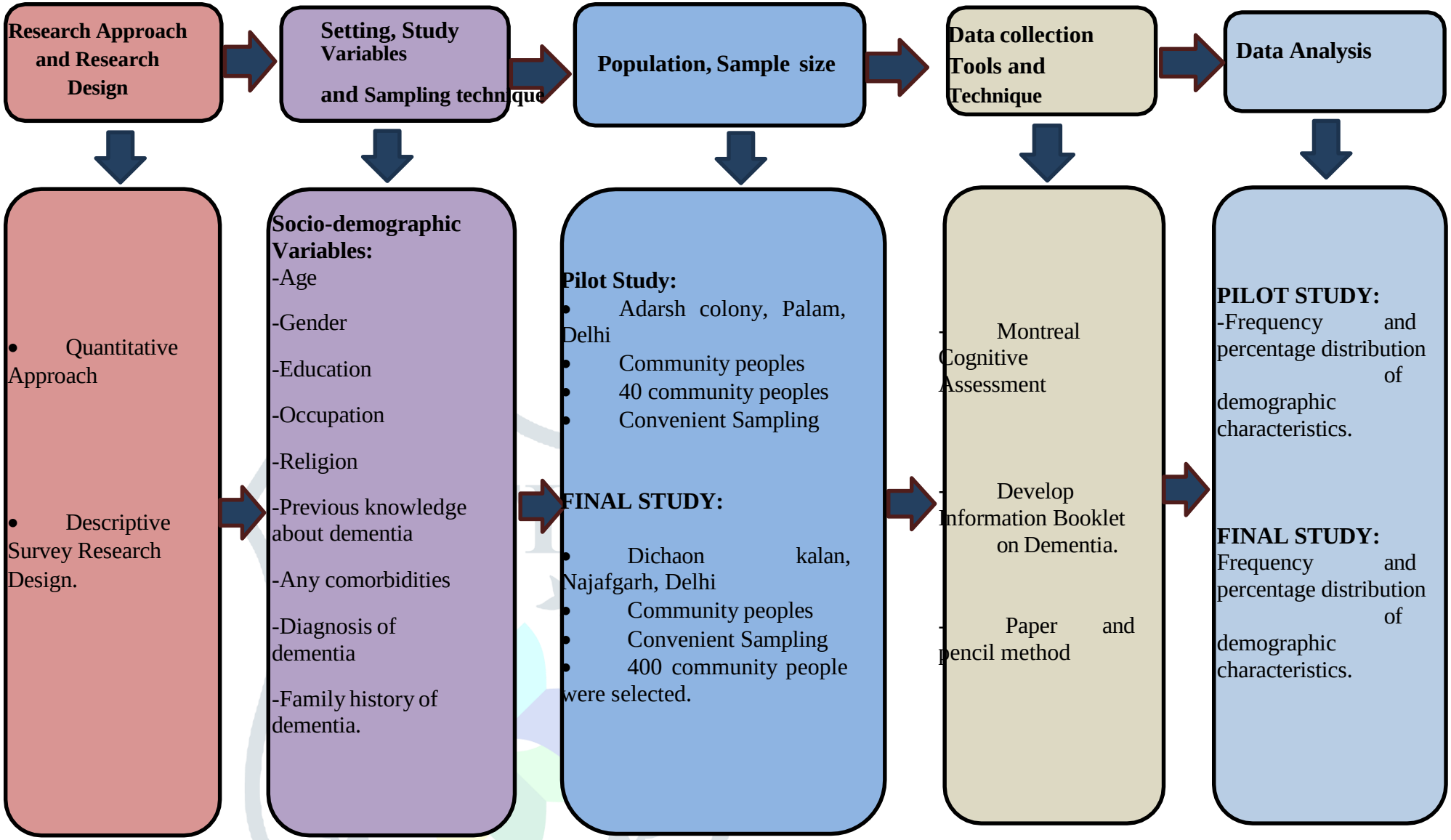

Figure 2: A Schematic Representation of the Research Methodology

RESULTS

The study revealed that out of 400 participants, nearly one-fourth exhibited signs of mild cognitive impairment as per MoCA scores. A significant association was found between age and cognitive decline. The majority of participants aged above 70 years demonstrated lower cognitive performance. Education and awareness levels were also found to influence dementia prevalence, with those having lower education performing poorly. The results underline the urgent need for community-based awareness programs to educate the public about early signs and preventive measures for dementia.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that dementia and cognitive impairment are significant health issues among the elderly population in Delhi. Low awareness levels and delayed recognition contribute to the rising burden. The development of an information booklet served as an essential step toward spreading awareness, promoting early detection, and encouraging timely medical consultation. The findings emphasize the importance of integrating dementia education into community health initiatives.

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