

Determinants of Quality of Life Among Refugees Aging Out of Place



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Background

- **Aging out of place (AOP):** Physical & emotional experience of growing older in a foreign / unfamiliar environment.
- AOP may challenge ability to successfully age. (Health & well-being, accessing services)
- Refugee = person outside their home country and unable to return to because of persecution based on the person's race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.
- Very little is known about the aging experiences of refugees in the US.
- Quality of Life (QOL) = degree to which a person is healthy, comfortable, and able to participate in or enjoy life.
- Immigrant experiences impact QOL.
- **Purpose of the study:** To extend our knowledge about aging out of place among aging refugees particularly with regard to the concept of quality of life.

Research Questions:

- **RQ1:** Is there an association between sociodemographic factors and QOL among aging refugees.
- **RQ2:** Is there an association between social connectedness and QOL . Is the association moderated by sociodemographic factors.

Methods

- **Study Sample:** 108 participants
- **Inclusion criteria:** Refugees aged 50 and above
- **Recruitment:** Community events & agencies, flyers, snowball
- **Survey:** Written questionnaire completed in person or at home

Measures

- **Socio-demographic variables** - Place of origin, Age, Sex, Marital status, Employment status, Education level, and Length of residence

Predictor Variables

- **Social integration** - The Social Integration in Later Life Scale (SILLS) (Fuller-Iglesias & Rajbhandari, 2016)
- **Loneliness** - The UCLA Loneliness Scale (Hughes et al., 2004)

Outcome Variables

- **Quality of life** -The Quality of Life Scale (QOLS) (Burckhardt & Anderson, 2003)

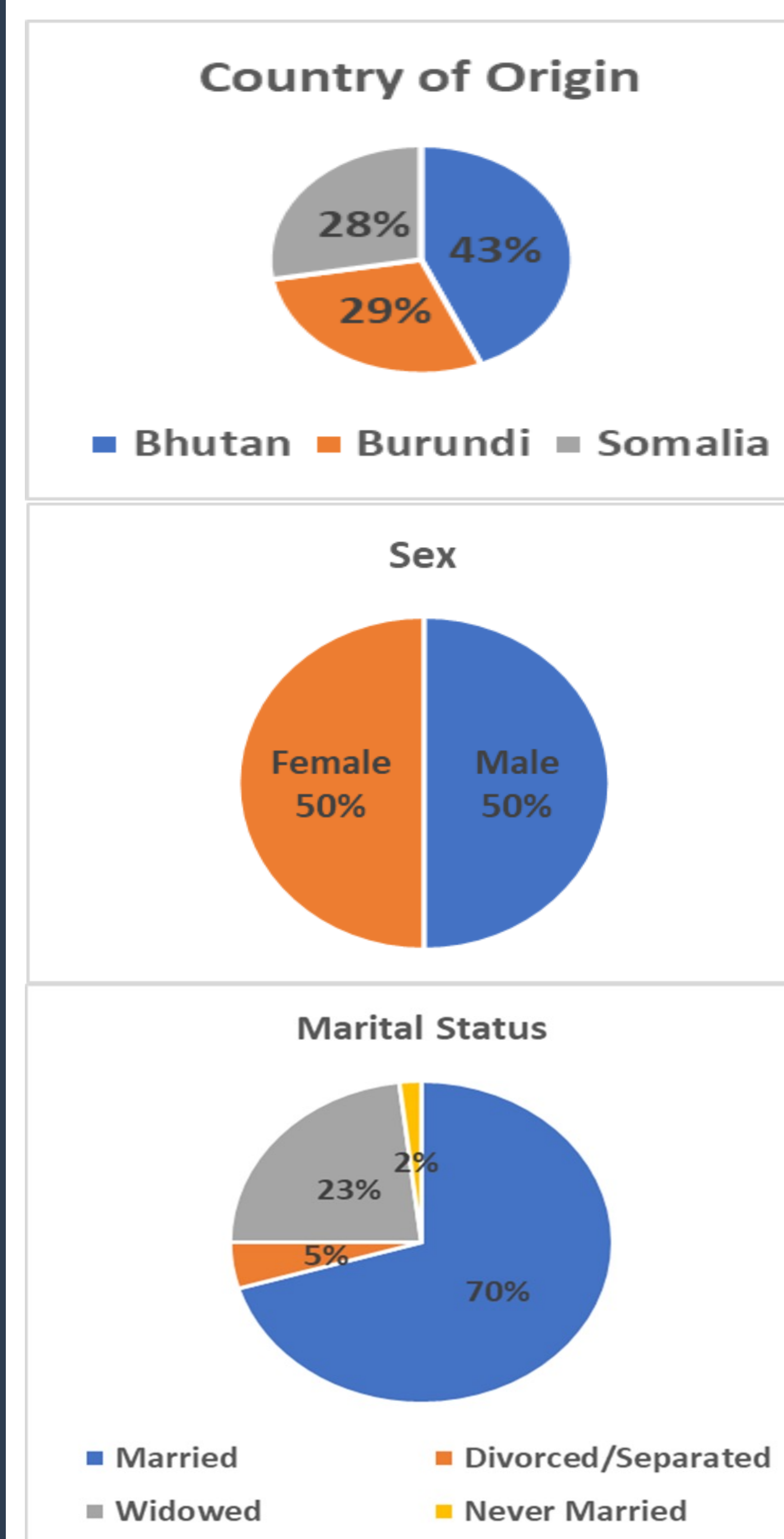
Data Analysis

- SPSS - regression

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Description	Mean	SD
Age	63.57	7.9
Length of US Res.	7.13	3.5

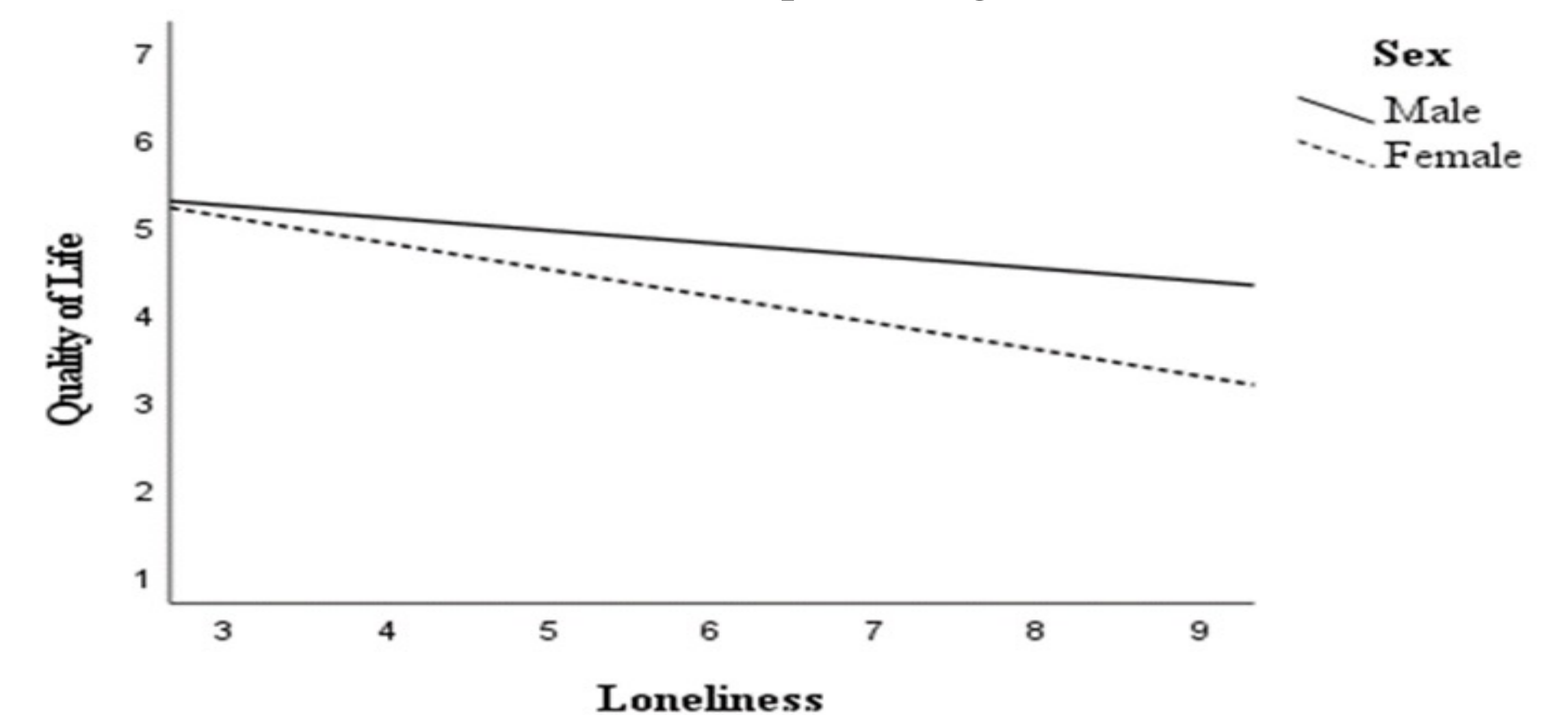


Association Between Sociodemographic factors and QOL

Sociodemographic factors	Quality of Life
Place of Origin	-.57*
Age	-.23*
Sex	-.39*
Married	-.15
Employed	.15
Education Level	.30*
Length of Residence	.00

Association Between Social Connectedness & QOL

- **Social Integration** - positively associated with QOL; No interaction effects of sociodemographic factors
- **Loneliness** - negatively associated with QOL; Significant interaction between loneliness and sex in predicting QOL



Discussion

- Overall aging refugees from Burundi & Somalia reported lower quality of life compared to those who were from Bhutan.
- Protective role of social connectedness in well-being especially for women.
- **Future Direction:** Longitudinal studies to explore trajectories of well-being.

References

- Fuller-Iglesias, H. R., & Rajbhandari, S. (2016). Development of a multidimensional scale of Social Integration in Later Life. *Research on Aging, 38*(1), 3-25.
- Burckhardt, C. S., & Anderson, K. L. (2003). The Quality of Life Scale (QOLS): Reliability, validity, and utilization. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes, 1*(60), 1-7.