

Joint Event

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## What type of grandparents take care of their grandchildren, why and which is its impact in their health?

Dolores Torres - Enamorado, María García Jiménez, Alicia Botello Hermosa, Carmen Caro-García, Carmen García-Gily and Rosa Casado-Mejía  
Seville University, Spain

**Introduction:** We are facing a rising ageing of “old people”, which increases dependency situations as well as the necessity of taking care of the dependent elderly, but also show diversity in this group of the population, as no every elder person is a dependent. This aspect together with the increase of women incorporation to the labor market and the current difficulties for family conciliation, have provoked that elder people play an important social role, for instance, in looking after their grandchildren

**Objective:** The objective of the study is to outline grandparents who care of their grandchildren and explore the reasons why they care and its impact in the elderly's health.

**Methodology:** The methodology involved is a mixed methodology with a convenience sampling. People responded to a questionnaire about sociodemographic information, reasons why they looked after their grandchildren and the way they did it. They also responded to the SF12v2 (Spanish version) – 4 weeks to measure their health status at the moment of the interview. This questionnaire has two main components: The Physical Health Component (PHC) and the Mental Health Component (MHC). 130 rural and urban grandparents from the Region of Seville were asked for completing the questionnaire, and it was carried out two grandmother's focus groups and two mixed focus groups. The four focus groups were formed by 7 to 9 participants.

**Findings/Conclusions:** 80.8% of the population were women who do not live with their grandchildren (88.7%), with primary education in the 47.4% of the cases and with an average age of 64.87 years old. 23.4% out of the total of these grandmothers are labor force and take care of their grandchildren 6.1 hours per day and 4.5 days per week on average. The main reason for look after them is due to having no choice. This aspect could be affecting their health, since significant differences were found in the MHC between the group of people whose reason for caring was having no choice ( $M=44.30$ ,  $SD=14.93$ ) and the group of people who had chosen caring themselves or because of personal enjoyment ( $M=49.85$ ,  $SD=10.08$ ), Welch's  $F(1, 131.41)=6.90$ ,  $p=.010$ ,  $R^2=.03$ . Similarly, differences were also found in the PHC between those people whose reason for caring was having no choice ( $M=42.36$ ,  $SD=15.02$ ) and people who cared because it was their own decision or as personal enjoyment ( $M=49.85$ ,  $SD=47.24$ ),  $F(1, 141)=3.94$ ,  $p=.049$ ,  $R^2=.02$ . Even though the size effect was small in both cases, descriptive data pointed as expected. Furthermore, findings from qualitative analysis showed that when people cared of grandchildren as a personal choice, care functions as a factor that improves health.

### Biography

Dolores Torres Enamorado has completed her PhD from Seville University. She is a Specialist in Family Primary Nursing Care and also in Gender Studies. She has participated in more than 15 congresses and started publishing papers in reputed journals. Currently she is Lecturer in the University Centre of Nursing “Saint John of God”, University of Seville and is working in two projects with public financing.

dolorestorres\_86@hotmail.com

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