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Quality of life based on level of physical activity among elderly residents of urban and rural areas

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Statement of the Problem: Quality of life and physical activity have been studied in population aging. To know these two factors in urban and rural environments in Brazil has not been the object of research. This research is relevant to the Brazilian reality because most municipalities (about 75%) have rural characteristics. Knowing the characteristics between the quality of life and levels of physical activity in these environments is fundamental to create a profile of the Brazilian elderly and establish efficient public policies in both contexts. The purpose of this study was to analyze the quality of life according to the level of physical activity of elderly living in urban (UA) and rural (RA) areas considering the income. Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was developed in the municipality of Palmas, state of Paraná, southern Brazil. Face-to-face interviews were carried out in the residence of the elderly by a previously trained staff. Quality of life, physical activity and economic condition were analyzed by statistical tests. Findings: Better scores were found in the RA population for physical activity and perception of quality of life, especially in the specific issues of old age. Being active showed better results compared to being insufficiently active in both contexts. The mean/low income characterized the majority of the elderly population and was higher than 99% in RA. Conclusion and Significance: Evidences was found that a better perception of quality of life is positively influenced by higher levels of physical activity especially for RA residents. Low income may be a factor that influences low levels of physical activity especially in UA. Therefore it is important to establish public policies that allow an active aging with better levels of health and quality of life, that attend urban and rural environments.

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