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EXPLORING OLDER PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES OF AGEING IN PLACE: A SCOPING REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The literature on the concept of ageing in place covers a wide range of areas. However, there is a shortage of studies on how it should be described according to older people's lived experiences. This scoping review methodology provides a five-step framework aimed at addressing the knowledge gap by exploring older people's lived experiences of ageing in place. Two databases, Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus, were used to search for relevant literature, and eleven articles were selected. 571 quotations from eleven studies described older people's (aged 60 to 99 years) experiences of ageing in place. Older people's favourable and less favourable experiences of ageing in place were of anything related to the built and social environments. So long as their needs are fulfilled, they are happy to age in place. Otherwise, they would feel burdened to remain and would consider relocating or moving from their homes and community. Overall, understanding the matters related to ageing in place made older people satisfied and contributed to their quality of life. Therefore, the stakeholders must collaborate and cooperate in creating an environment that can accommodate the needs of older people.

1. Introduction

The number of older people worldwide is expected to double over the next three decades, reaching over 1.5 billion in 2050. In 2020, there were 727 million people aged 65 years and over worldwide (United Nations, 2020). Thanks to better health development, people today can increase life expectancy levels and decrease fertility levels. As people live longer lives between 2020 and 2050, the number of older populations will also expand globally. Therefore, the increasing number of older people calls for the vital need for better living arrangements to accommodate them because older people's living arrangements have a significant impact on their physical and psychosocial health and life satisfaction (Henning-Smith et al., 2018). This condition is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, whereby all segments of society deserve to enjoy the benefits regardless of age, including older people.

Home, as an ideal living environment, enhances physical and psychosocial health as well as life satisfaction. Older people prefer to age in place because they believe that their own homes and neighbourhoods are safe and accessible. Furthermore, they always have social supports and financial resources to access the care they need to live comfortably in their homes (Barken, 2021). One of the key drivers in addressing the ageing policy is ageing in place. In most countries, the demographic transition has made ageing in place one of the underlying themes of the government's ageing strategy (Van Dijk et al., 2015). Ageing in place policies have evolved across the world in response to the growing pressures on the financial cost of providing long-term care (Pani-Harremann et al., 2021). In addition, older people today believe that maintaining independence well into old is their goal. They choose to age at home instead of in a nursing home. Therefore, the policy's goal of supporting people in their own homes is expanded to focus on those supports. The policies cover community-based initiatives for older people who live independently at home (World Health Organization, 2015).

2. Lived experiences and ageing in place

In order to explore ageing in place, quotes from studies that documented the voices of older people as well as how they felt about and interpreted their decisions and actions will be incorporated in this study. The quotes are known as lived experiences. In studying lived experiences, older people will show their sense of place through their bodies (Yeh, 2020). For example, the researcher can conduct in-depth interviews, participant observation, and photovoice to learn about people's life stories, needs, and experiences. The researcher believes that by paying close attention to lived experiences, particularly those related to the dynamic interaction between a person's characteristics and their environments, appropriate support for helping older people to age in place as well as the gaps in knowledge and future research directions can be identified.

The concept of ageing in place has grown in popularity as the current ageing process has become more prevalent. The majority of older people choose to remain in their homes. Older people may prefer to age in place because they have a strong desire to do so or have no other option (Granbom et al., 2021). Because moving to a long-term care facility is challenging, ageing in place provides the best possibility for older people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible (Grimmer et al., 2015). Ageing in place is also a positive way to satisfy older people's needs, supporting them to live independently or with help for as long as possible (Horner & Boldy, 2008).

The definitions vary extensively from the perspectives of older people; they may relate to home, vicinity or neighbourhood, and other wider contexts. Among the several factors to consider to age in place include whether the older people fit the physical place, social connections, and needed services. Most older people who prefer to age in place either live independently or near their family members (Ismail et al., 2020). To age well in a place, Finlay et al. (2020) identified that homes and communities that older people live in should be safe and comfortable, have easy

access to service, value social connection, and be available for stimulation that fulfils meaningful activities.

Most findings on ageing in place come from researchers, health professionals, caregivers, and adult children rather than individuals experiencing ageing. From a research viewpoint, lived experiences recognise that individuals are experts in their own lives, not their clinicians or caregivers. Therefore, to understand the concept of lived experiences better, this study intends to explore older people's lived experiences of ageing in place, as directly expressed by the older people themselves.

3. Methodology

A scoping review on older people's experiences of ageing in place was carried out sequentially according to the five research steps proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005), which include identifying the research question, identifying relevant studies, selecting studies, charting the data, and collating, summarising, and reporting the results. For this study, the researcher did not conduct any consultation exercise to inform and validate the main scoping review findings as it is an optional step.

Stage 1: Identifying the research question

The first research step of this scoping review is identifying the research question. This study seeks to explore the research question: what is known from the existing literature about older people's experiences of ageing in place? The review by Forsyth and Molinsky (2021) reveals that the meaning of ageing in place differs depending on the context and users of the term. Older people have a different understanding of the definition of the concept compared to other parties, such as policymakers and social workers. Older people are also the ones experiencing the situation, and their definition should be counted in the policymaking process. In this study, the researchers acknowledged the term 'ageing in place' as an ambiguous term that could include possible good experiences or bad experiences of older people. Therefore, extensive definitions of what might constitute ageing in place for older people, for example, might reduce the likelihood of missing relevant articles (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005).

Stage 2: Identifying relevant studies

The second research step of this scoping review is identifying relevant studies. In this second step, the researcher used an electronic database as the main source to search for past studies. In addition, in terms of the period of the studies and context, the researcher selected five years and only English studies. As shown in Table 1, the two key concepts developed from the research question are presented in two concept groups. This study mapped the two key concepts, ageing in place and older people, by exploring older people's experiences of ageing in place. In addition to the key concepts, the appropriate terms used in the search strategy have also been identified from the previous studies.

Table 1
Concepts and Terms Used in the Search Strategy

Concept	Terms used in the search strategy
Ageing in place	"ageing at home" OR "independent living" OR "healthy ageing" OR

Older people	"housing for elderly" "elderly " OR "older adult" OR "senior residents" OR "aged people"
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As shown in Table 2, the primary literature search from 2017 to 2021 was conducted using the electronic databases of Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus. These databases were chosen for their combined potential to generate a wide range of evidence specific to the research topic across multiple interdisciplinary fields. The researcher only searched for social sciences and urban and development studies articles. Moreover, only open-access articles and English materials were included in the search strategy.

Table 2
Search Strategy

Database	Search string	Details of the search strategy
Web of Science (WoS)	(((((((((ALL=(ageing in place)) OR ALL=(independent living)) OR ALL=(healthy ageing)) OR ALL=(housing for elderly)) OR ALL=(ageing at home)) AND ALL=(older people)) OR ALL=(elderly)) OR ALL=(older adult)) OR ALL=(senior residents)) OR ALL=(aged people)) AND ALL=(experience)	Publication date: 2017 – 2022 Open access Document Type: Research articles Language: English Web of Science Categories: Social sciences interdisciplinary Social issues Urban studies Development studies
Scopus	"ageing in place" OR "independent living" OR "healthy ageing" OR "housing for elderly" OR "ageing at home" AND "older people" OR "elderly" OR "older adult" OR "senior residents" OR "aged people" AND "experience" AND (LIMIT-TO (OA , "all")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2022) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2021) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2020) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2019) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2018) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2017)) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English"))	Publication Year: 2017 – 2022 All open access Document Type: Research articles Language: English Subject area: Social sciences

Stage 3: Study selection

After identifying relevant studies, the selection process picked up many irrelevant studies. In this regard, the researcher eliminated reflections that did not address the central research question at this stage. Furthermore, the researcher also developed the inclusion and exclusion criteria to increase familiarity with the literature and ensure consistency in the selection process (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Next, the researcher obtained all full articles based on the criteria set.

As the central question for this study highlights what is known from the literature about older people's experiences of ageing in place, the presence of older people is, therefore, an essential selection criterion.

Studies were chosen based on the following qualifying criteria:

1. The studies must be related to social sciences, development studies, or urban studies. Studies relating to gerontology or design were excluded.
2. The studies must report on older people's present perspectives. Studies with a population younger than the definition of older people were excluded. This population group discusses their future planning and not their recent experiences.
3. Only research articles were included. All forms of review articles were excluded.
4. Older people speaking about ageing in place based on their lived experiences were included as research participants, regardless of the research design, particularly in terms of either a qualitative or quantitative design.

At this stage, the researcher first discovered and reviewed the articles retrieved from the database search. The researcher independently screened the records by titles and subsequently abstracts. Next, the researcher conducted a full-text examination using the selection criteria and resolved any uncertainty about the inclusion of an article.

Stage 4: Charting the data

After the process of study selection, the researcher chartered the data synthesising and interpreting information from the studies. The researcher decided on the information from the primary studies to be recorded. At this stage, the researcher recorded the information from the preliminary studies in a data charting form. The researcher decided to record about study population and study design in the databases.

Stage 5: Collating, summarising, and reporting the results

In the last stage, the researcher collated, summarised, and reported the results in the current article. Based on the information that has been sifted, charted, and sorted, the researcher presented an overview of all materials reviewed in the results section. The researcher decided on the best way to report the material; thus, the researcher presented using tables. From the included records, the name of the authors, the publication date, the location of the study, the population of the study, and the methodologies were all extracted. In addition to these five stages, the researcher may also consider having a consultation exercise to update and validate the main scoping review findings. However, the researcher did not conduct any consultation exercise for this study.

4. Results

Figure 1 depicts the search flow procedure. The two databases yielded a total of 819 articles. Following the title and abstract screening, 22 articles were selected for full-text examination. Consequently, eleven articles met the inclusion criteria.

Identification

Records retrieved via the following databases (Total n = 819:)
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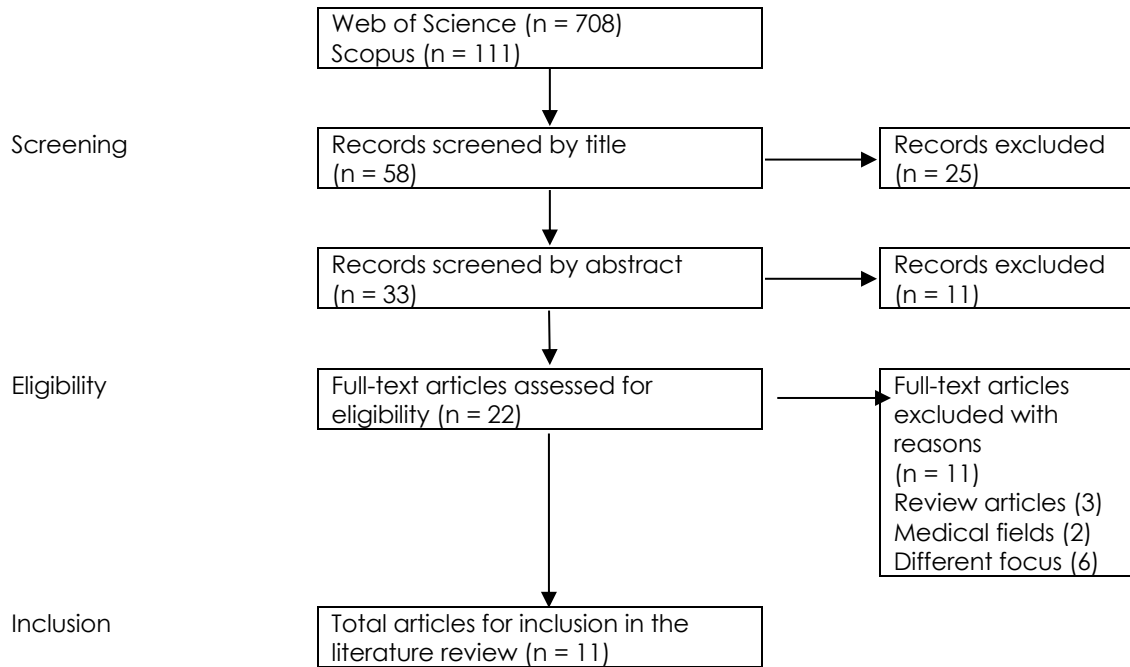


Figure 1: Search Flow Process

Study Characteristics

Table 3 presents an overview of included studies (n = 11) published between 2017 and 2022. A total of 571 older people, aged 60 to 99 years, participated in the studies. Most studies included 11 to 20 participants (n = 90), aged 60 years and older (n = 571), and used interviews only (n = 149).

Older people's favourable and less favourable experiences of ageing in place were of anything related to the built and social environments. For most older people, so long as their needs are fulfilled, they are happy to age in place. Otherwise, they would consider relocating or moving from their homes and community.

Table 3

Descriptions of Included Research Papers of Scoping Review on Experiences of Ageing in Place

No.	Author (year)	Country	Population (N)	Age years (years old)	Research method	Methodology approach
1.	van Hees et al. (2017)	Netherlands	18	70-85	Qualitative research	Ethnographic (photovoice)
2.	Anderson et al. (2018)	Australia	11	71-92	Qualitative research	Case study
3.	Bamzar (2019)	Sweden	56	65-75	Quantitative research	Survey
4.	Jakubec et al. (2019)	Canada	36	60-80	Qualitative research	Group Interview

5.	Vos et al. (2020)	Netherlands	14	64-92	Qualitative research	Focus Group Discussion
6.	Yu & Rosenberg (2020)	China	47	60+	Qualitative research	Interview
7.	Grove (2020)	Ireland	15	65+	Qualitative research	Interview
8.	Bayar & Türkoğlu (2021)	Turkey	20	70-96	Qualitative research	Interview
9.	Wagner (2021)	United States	5	64-90	Qualitative research	Interview
10.	Kwan & Tam (2021)	Hong Kong	12	65+	Qualitative research	Case study
11.	(van Hoof et al., 2022)	Netherlands	337	65+	Quantitative research	Survey

Older People's Experiences of Ageing in Place

In van Hees et al.'s (2017) analysis, the older people demonstrated that the meaningfulness of neighbourhoods is situated and individually defined. Through a photovoice study, the older people confirmed that functionality and value and meaning are elementary for ageing in place. However, older people in the study described functionality and value and meaning differently by emphasising how places are specific for them. The older people have different views because their photographs did not represent similar stories for each of them. Those living in remote areas in the Netherlands with fewer services in their immediate environment shared how they were afraid to lose the functional places in the neighbourhood, while those living in central areas photographed places useful for themselves or their neighbours. In addition, older people in the study also believed that public places in both locations offer social participation and social interaction opportunities. The findings showed that older people feel particularly attached to places embedded in their history; they always love the nostalgic feelings of the places and are not willing to let themselves be replaced.

In addition, to consider whether to age in place, older people will look into how social networks and local community services impact their lives (Anderson et al., 2018). In a community like Castletown, Australia, older people's social networks are about the distance between the kin, their adult children and siblings, the non-kin, and their friends. Most of the older people in the area considered a future move or relocating, and have no current plans for relocation due to the location of their homes. Due to their poor health condition, they also decided to relocate themselves around health facilities, having full support from their family members in terms of financial aid and personal care.

In the study by Bamzar (2019), the application of universal design may change the physical features of the indoor living environment of older people's homes. In Hasselgarden senior housing, Sweden, older people expected their apartments to have a safe, quality indoor living environment that meet their needs. By applying universal design in the built design, the frequency of use of the area is higher, with less falls and high perceived safety among older people. The study showed that the living room is the safest area, while the bathroom is the least safe area of their senior housing. Therefore, older people who decide to age in place and live independently in their homes are actually at risk of injuries if the built environment does not apply universal design.

In addition, the study by Jakubec et al. (2019) in suburban Canada focused on the role of community in the well-being of older people in the neighbourhood. The finding showed that belonging in suburban communities is complex for older people and can only be experienced through connection, contribution, and cooperation. The majority of the older people expressed a desire to feel connected and know others and the resources available, be active contributors in their communities, and do community work in cooperation with others across cultures and

generations. They believed that by feeling, knowing, being, and doing, their experiences of ageing in place would be better.

In the Netherlands, Vos et al. (2020) found that older people who decided to age in place and receive home care experienced a high impact of social network change. For instance, the older people were struggling with the death or illness of their partners, regretting the loss of their close people, changing relations with their family members, and feeling dependent on helpers all this while by themselves. Nonetheless, the intensity of these social network change experiences tends to vary. When several events occurred in the older people's lives at the same time, they were drifting away from the lives they used to live. However, most older people can find ways to recover from the changes even though the pace and intensity of the process differ from one person to another.

In Beijing, China, older people faced changing environments related to their relocation experience and residential and neighbourhood type (Yu & Rosenberg, 2020); their built and social environments mostly influence their experience. Older people that have no relocation experience and continue living in the same neighbourhood tend to face more built environment challenges even though they show stronger ties with their neighbours. They are familiar with old neighbours in terms of emotional support, sense of belonging, and trust; however, most older people were unfamiliar with the community members and new neighbours and did not count on their family members to care for them. Thus, even though they relocated to a new area with a better built environment, their old neighbourhood relations would always remain in their memory.

Meanwhile, the study by Grove (2020a) in Dublin, Ireland, shows how older people value their functioning and capabilities when they could get out and about, engage and connect with others, carry out daily tasks and errands, and remain independent. Thus, a supportive environment and social support are important to age well in place to compromise with older people's physical and cognitive capacities.

In the study conducted by Bayar and Türkoğlu (2021) in two different cities in Turkey, older people were found to have different engagement levels with the city. Generally, in different neighbourhoods, older people tend to isolate themselves when they do not support their basic needs. On the other hand, they are successfully ageing in place when they have easy access to urban facilities such as health care facilities in their neighbourhood. In addition, when older people are financially independent or have a higher income level, their sociability, engagement in paid leisure activities, and engagement in the city also increase. Therefore, the older people's living environment experiences in these cities depend on their daily life routines and level of income.

Moreover, older people have also experienced how finances and caregiving support significantly impacted their lives at home and their ability to age in place (Wagner, 2021). In general, most older people desire to remain in their homes only if they have the financial means to support them. Based on Wagner's (2021) study, financial situations could threaten the ability of older people to age in place and make it difficult for them to remain in the home they loved. Their financial status also influenced the decision to have formal caregiving, as they received a varied amount of caregiving support from their formal and informal caregivers. Informal caregivers such as family members support older people to ensure that they are safe in their homes.

On the other hand, older people in Tai O Village, Hong Kong, still live in stilt houses, which are ancestral homes and were built and lived throughout multiple generations (Kwan & Tam, 2021). Most of them chose to age in place because they are not familiar with Hong Kong city's living style, higher cost of living, and air pollution. Instead, they are used to lower costs and being comfortable with the lifestyle in the small town of Tai O Village. Older people in their study also have positive experiences because, as they sustain and continue their work, this type of social participation enables them to connect with their neighbours and others in the community.

Lastly, the Hague, in the study by van Hoof et al. (2022), received an overall score of satisfaction regarding age-friendliness from older people living in the city. However, even though the study involves older people living in their own homes, the findings showed that they have

different perceptions of their city's age-friendliness. There were significant differences in age, gender, socio-economic status, use of mobility aids, and receiving care support. They were satisfied with social participation, civic participation and employment, communication and information, respect and social inclusion, community support and health services, transportation and financial situation of the city but not with the rest of the domains, housing and outdoor spaces, and buildings.

5. Discussion

This scoping review has synthesised and mapped the current literature on older people's experiences of ageing in place. While ageing in place is probably a favourable experience for older people, ageing in place can be less favourable when their needs are not taken care of. Evidently, older people tend to have a favourable experience of ageing in place when the conditions of the place that they live in have a function, value, and meaning to them (van Hees et al., 2017), a safety design (Bamzar, 2019), and easy access to facilities (Bayar & Türkoğlu, 2021). In addition, older people are also happy when they are able to participate or engage with the community (Bayar & Türkoğlu, 2021; Jakubec et al., 2019; Kwan & Tam, 2021) and gain formal and informal support from others (Wagner, 2021; Yu & Rosenberg, 2020). However, due to issues related to health (Anderson et al., 2018; Kwan & Tam, 2021; Vos et al., 2020), finances (Wagner, 2021), lack of built (Bamzar, 2019; Yu & Rosenberg, 2020) and social environments (Bayar & Türkoğlu, 2021; Grove, 2020b; Wagner, 2021), older people may also face challenges to age in place. As a result, these are the main reasons that influence the decision of older people to stay or consider relocating to another living arrangement.

The researcher chose to employ a scoping review here because the goal is to quickly capture the key concepts and evidence in current research on ageing in place, which is precisely what scoping reviews are for. The scoping review has explored older people's experiences of ageing in place. Based on the articles reviewed, older people's experiences are associated with both favourable and less favourable experiences. In response to our research question, we found that older people's experiences of ageing in place were of anything related to the built and social environments. Built environment relates to the physical conditions of the homes and neighbourhood, which significantly influence the mobility, independence, and quality of life of older people and their ability to age in place. In contrast, a social environment involves their locally situated relationship with the people surrounding them (Odzakovic et al., 2021). This relationship includes older people's family members, friends, neighbours, and the public. In essence, they are happy to age in place when their needs are fulfilled; otherwise, they would consider relocating or moving from their homes and community.

6. Conclusion

The researcher opted for a scoping review since the current study aims to capture the key concepts and evidence discovered in current research on ageing in place, which is exactly what scoping reviews are intended to achieve. One of the strengths of this scoping review lies in mapping the relevant materials to this topic. This process gives a defined direction for doing research and presenting findings. The purpose of this scoping review of the literature is to explore older people's experiences of ageing in place. Overall, based on the articles reviewed by the researcher, most older people have had good experiences ageing in place rather than feeling burdened by their decision to remain in their own house and community. As this review presents a synthesis of older people's lived experiences, the findings will assist the policymakers to tailor their aims to meet older people's needs so that better facilities and services can be provided.

Nonetheless, this scoping review also has several limitations, which are readily evident. For instance, publications in other languages went unidentified because only studies published in English were included. Besides, the preliminary search also found a significant number of articles that were not peer-reviewed; hence, the Google Scholar database was not searched. In addition, the researcher only searched for open-access articles. Although this option resulted in some relevant publications, the researcher considered that the databases included social sciences academic literature.

In essence, if we respect the lived experiences of older people, we must listen when they tell us that they need to age in place. Based on what the older people have expressed thus far, the aspects required for ageing in place include the built and social environments. Hence, it is necessary for the stakeholders such as policymakers, urban planners, sociologists, neighbourhood associations, and researchers to collaborate and cooperate in creating an environment that can accommodate the needs of older people.

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Authors Contributions

Noorlailahasna Mohd Yusof drafted the manuscript, wrote the literature, designed the methodology, organized the results and conclusions. Suziana Mat Yasin wrote the literature and supervised the research for this publication.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest with this publication.

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