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A comparative study of depression in elderly males and females residing in old age home in Chhattisgarh

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Abstract

During last one hundred years, longevity has increased manifold. This has also led to rise of elderly population. The sizeable chunk of these elderly resides in old age homes. The basic idea of establishing old age homes was to cater the need of elderly who do not have spouse or caretaker to look after them. The present study aims to compare geriatric depression in male and female elderly residing in old age homes in the state of Chhattisgarh. To conduct the study 40 male and 40 female elderly (>60 years) residing in old age homes were selected as sample. The established old age homes from where the sample is taken are located in Durg district of Chhattisgarh. The average age of elderly males was 65.33 years while that of female elderly was 63.14 years. Geriatric Depression Scale prepared by Ganguli *et al.* (1999) was used as psychological tool in the present study. The results reveal that elderly women living in old age homes were significantly more depressed as compared to elderly males living in old age home. It was concluded that elderly females than males living in old age homes are more prone towards developing depressive symptoms.

Keywords: Depression, geriatric, old age homes, gender

Introduction

Due to advancement in medical science and awareness towards health, last 100 years saw an increase in longevity. This also saw a rise of population of elderly people. This applies to India also. In India, increased life expectancy contributed to rise in older population also. The percentage of people of 60 years and above has risen from 6.8% in 1991 to 8% percent in 2011. According to trends population of older people in India will be 9.3% by 2016, 10.7% by 2021 and 12.40% by 2026. It will further increase to 19% of the total population of India by 2050 (UNFPA, 2012). The people of geriatric age in India will be around 323 million in 2050. Normally old age homes are established for those elderly who did not have the support of their family or children. The things have changed and in modern times the number in these old age homes are increasing. Social alienation and loneliness are often associated with elderly living in old age homes. Snapped social interaction along with loneliness and sacrificed physical functioning give rise to depression in elderly adults living in old age homes. According to Salmans (1997), state of low mood is considered as depression and it eventually affect person's well-being. People suffering from depression often lack interest in day-to-day activities. Depression although is not confined to any age group but it is seen in more magnitude among elderly. Barua *et al.* (2011) ^[1] in their study reported 10 to 25% prevalence rate of depression in elderly population. This has significant bearing in Indian context because there are 90 million and more elderly in India and quite a few live in old age homes. Researchers like Steffens *et al.* (2000) ^[8], Singh and Mishra (2009) ^[7], Sethi *et al.* (2013) ^[6] have studied depression in elderly but depression in elderly males and females living in of old age homes has not been studied so far. Hence, it would be worthwhile to compare geriatric depression in male and female inmates of old age homes. This will enable to psychological intervention to manage geriatric depression separately in male and female elderly living in old age homes.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the present study is to compare geriatric depression between male and female elderly residing in old age homes.

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Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that gender will significantly influence geriatric depression in elderly subjects living in old age homes.

Methodology

Sample

The present study aims to compare geriatric depression in male and female elderly residing in old age homes in the state of Chhattisgarh. To conduct the study 40 male and 40 female elderly (>60 years) residing in old age homes were selected as sample. The established old age home from where the sample is taken, is located in Durg district of Chhattisgarh. The average age of elderly males was 65.33 years while that of female elderly was 63.14 years.

Tools

Geriatric Depression Scale

Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) prepared by Ganguli (1999) was used to assess depression in older adults (>60 years). Hindi version of this scale consists of 30 statements. This scale is highly reliable and valid.

Procedure

Prior consent was obtained from subjects regarding their voluntary participation in this study. Geriatric Depression Scale (1999) prepared by Ganguli (1999) and validated by Pracheth *et al.* (2013) [3] was administered to each subject. The response for each statement was scored off as per manual for all the selected subjects. Then the data was organised in two pre defined study groups. To compare geriatric depression between male and female residents of old age homes, independent sample 't' test was used. The results are presented in table 1.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Comparison of Depression between Elderly Male and Female Subjects Living in Old Age Homes

	Groups				't'
	Elderly Males (N=40)		Elderly Females (N=40)		
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
Depression	13.25	6.23	16.60	6.83	2.29*

* Significant at .05 level, $t(df=78) = 1.99$

Results shown in table 1 clearly indicate statistically significant difference between elderly males and female subjects living in old age homes as far as depression is concerned. $t=2.29$ also reveal that female residents of old age homes were significantly more depressed ($M=16.60$) as compared to male residents of old age homes ($M=13.25$) at .05 level of significance.

The result of the present study is consistent with the studies conducted by Maulik and Dasgupta (2012) [2] and Taqui *et al.* (2007) [9]. Elderly females showing more magnitude of geriatric depression as compared to elderly males with both males and females are residing in old age home. This may be due to a fact that females are more attached to family and social surroundings hence they feel of loneliness and social isolation more so that is why they show significantly higher level of depression as compared to elderly males.

Conclusion

On the basis of results and associated discussion it was

concluded that among residents of old age homes, female elderly experiences significantly more magnitude of depression as compared to elderly males.

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