



A COMPARATIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION AMONG ELDERLY MEN AND WOMEN IN SELECTED RURAL AREAS OF PATHANAMTHITTA DISTRICT

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Back ground Mental health is a core component of healthy Anxiety and depression are two important mental health problems among the geriatric population. **Objectives** The objectives were to assess the level of anxiety among elderly men and women, to assess the level of depression among elderly men and women, to compare the level of anxiety among elderly men and women, to compare the level of depression among elderly men and women. **Methods** Descriptive research design with quantitative approach and convenient sampling was used to accomplish the objectives. The researcher used modified standardized Geriatric Anxiety Scale and modified standardized Geriatric Depression Scale to assess the anxiety and depression among elderly men and women. Data analysis was done by using descriptive and inferential statistics. **Result** Results showed that there is significantly higher level of anxiety and depression among females. **Conclusion:** This study concludes that there is high prevalence of depression and anxiety among the elderly, especially among the elderly women. Hence interventions are needed to reduce the stressors of the elderly people's lives.

KEYWORDS

Mental Health, Anxiety, Depression, Comparative Study

INTRODUCTION

"Knowledge is the key to a healthier life, and education is a powerful medicine."

K Park

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by apprehension and somatic symptoms of tension in which an individual anticipates impending danger, catastrophe, or misfortune. Depression is a mood disorder in which feelings of sadness, loss, anger, or frustration which interfere with daily life for weeks or longer. Depression in older adults is a widespread problem, and it is not a normal part of aging¹.

About 322 million people are affected with depression worldwide. Depression is the single largest contributor to global disability (7.5%, 2015) and a major contributor to suicides (800,000 annually). Anxiety and depression are major mental health problems, which are yet to be recognized as an important public health challenges. In India, elderly persons (60 years and above) constitute 8.6% of the total population (India Census 2011), which is projected to reach 19% by 2050. Thus, depression among elderly population is likely to be a major cause of disease burden in the future².

Need for the Study

The incidence and prevalence of depression and anxiety among the elderly population is increasing in worldwide³, hence early diagnosis and prompt treatment are essential to reduce its burden in the community. Screening for depression and anxiety in the elderly is vital in improving elderly mental health. This helps the health care to be delivered in the most prudent way. Mental health is a core component of health. Unfortunately, in the rural areas of Kerala, people with symptoms of anxiety and depression are often ignored. Therefore, it is significant to conduct a study to assess anxiety and depression in elderly population.

Statement of the problem

A comparative study to assess the anxiety and depression among elderly men and women in selected rural area of Pathanamthitta district.

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the level of anxiety among elderly.
2. To assess the level of depression among elderly.
3. To compare the level of anxiety among elderly men and women.
4. To compare the level of depression among elderly men and women.

METHODOLOGY

Research approach: Quantitative approach
Research design: Descriptive research design

Variables Dependent Variables: Depression and Anxiety

Independent Variables: Age, gender, religion, education, occupation, income, marital status, family, any regular medications, any diseases, recreational activities etc.

Setting of the study: selected rural areas of Pathanamthitta District.

Population: Elderly population

Sample: elderly men and women of rural area

Sample size: 190 (95 men and 95 women)

Sampling technique: Convenient sampling technique

Tools and technique

Part A: Demographic data

Part B: GAS – Geriatric Anxiety Scale structured by Segal, June, Payne, Coolidge and Yochim (2010) will be used for assessing anxiety. **Part C:** Geriatric depression screening to structure by Yesavage and Brink will be used to Setting of the study

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

Section 1: Distribution of male and female population based on demographic variables.

- The majority of the subjects are coming under age group of 60-70 (47.4%).
- According to gender both male and female are 50% each
- Majority of the subjects according to the religion are Hindus 51.6%.
- The majority of the subjects according to the educational qualification are having primary level education 69.5%.
- The majority of the subjects according to the current working status are people who are not working 83.2%.
- The majority of the subjects according to the income status, BPL 51.6%.
- The majority of the subjects according to the marital status are married population 66.3%.
- The majority of the subjects according to the family type are nuclear families 46.3%.
- The majority of the subjects according to the regular medication status are people on regular medication 85.8%.
- The majority of the subjects according to the disease status are having lifestyle diseases 91.1%.

Section 2: Description of male and female population based on level of anxiety

Majority of the samples are having moderate anxiety (39.5%), (33.2%) are having mild anxiety and (27.4%) are having severe anxiety

Section 3: Description of male and female population based on level of depression

Majority of the samples are having mild depression (47.9%), (35.8%)

are having severe depression (35.8%) and (16.3%) are normal

Section 4: Comparison of male and female population according to the level of depression.

Among males (77.9%) having depression and among females (89.5%) having depression.

Section 5: Comparison of male and female population according to the level of anxiety.

Table 1:

Gender	Anxiety Status		Total
	Present	Absent	
Male	58 (66.1%)	37 (38.9%)	95 (100%)
Female	80 (84.2%)	15 (15.8%)	95 (100%)
Total	138 (72.6%)	52 (27.4%)	190 (100%)

Chi square value = 12.815, P<0.001 (Significant)

Section 6: Comparison of anxiety and depression based on male and female population.

Table 2:

Parameter	Gender	Mean (SD)	T value	P value	Interpretation
Anxiety Score	Male	10.68(5.143)	6.307	<0.001	Significant
	Female	15.95(6.302)			
Depression Score	Male	10.16(4.451)	5.058	<0.001	Significant
	Female	13.53(4.724)			

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Section 1: Distribution of sample characteristics

The majority of the subjects are coming under age group of 60-70 (47.4%) in that both male and female are 50%. Majority of the subjects are Hindus 51.6% and educational qualification are having primary level education 69.5%, most of the subjects were unemployed, 83.2%, the family type are nuclear families 46.3%, people who are not engaged in recreational activities 90.5%.

Section 2: Assessment of the level of anxiety among elderly.

The investigator identified that in elderly 27.4% are having mild level of anxiety status, 33.2% are having moderate level of anxiety status and 39.5% are having severe level of anxiety status.

Section 3: Assessment of the level of depression among elderly.

The investigator identified that in elderly 16.3% are having mild level of depression, 47.9% are having moderate level of depression and 35.8% are having severe level of depression.

Section 4: Comparison of anxiety among men and women in elderly.

From this it is clear that there is significantly higher level of anxiety among females with mean of 15.95 and standard deviation of 6.3. The male is having mean values of 10.6 and standard deviation of 5.14.

Section 5: Comparison of depression among men and women in elderly.

From this it is clear that there is significantly higher level of depression among females with mean value of 13.53 and standard deviation 4.7 and males having mean value of 10.16 and standard deviation 4.451.

The findings of this study supported by a cross sectional study aimed to find out the mental health status and factors associated with it among senior citizens. The study design was across sectional survey among the senior citizens residing in Tansen Municipality, Palpa was conducted. 245 participants were selected randomly from the list of senior citizens, enrolled in senior citizen allowance scheme. Data was collected by doing face to face interviews using Geriatric Depression Scale -15 and Geriatric Anxiety Scale-10. The results have shown that mean age of the participants was 78.33 years. Most of the participants were female (52.2%), 95.5% were physically independent and 68.2% had some physical problems. Regarding depression, 30.6% and 2% of the participants had the symptoms suggestive and indicative of depression respectively. Whereas, 8.2% had severe symptoms of anxiety. The anxiety and depression were correlated and were associated with companion of living, education status, physical dependency, and comorbid physical problems.⁴

The present study is aimed at assessing the anxiety and depression among elderly men and women in selected rural areas of Pathanamthitta district. This study found that there is significantly higher level of anxiety and depression among females and there is high prevalence of depression and anxiety among the elderly, especially among the elderly women. Hence interventions are needed to reduce the stressors of the elderly people's lives.

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CONCLUSION