

A Study to Assess the Level of Depression Among Geriatric Population at Selected Urban Area, Dholpur, Rajasthan

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Abstract

India's rapidly increasing elderly population, depression has emerged as a major public health issue, often remaining underdiagnosed and untreated due to overlapping age-related problems and social changes. Factors such as social isolation, chronic illness, financial stress, and the shift from joint to nuclear families contribute significantly to late-life depression. This study aims to assess the level of depression among the geriatric population in a selected urban area of Dholpur, Rajasthan. The study utilizes the Modified Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-20) which was given by Jerome Yesavage in early 1980s, to identify the presence and severity of depression among individuals aged 60 years and above. It further examines associations between depression levels and demographic variables including age, gender, marital status, family type, education, and income status. Understanding these patterns is essential for early detection, effective intervention, and improving the quality of life of the elderly. The findings are expected to support health professionals and policymakers in strengthening geriatric mental-health services.

Keywords: Mental health, Urban area, Prevalence, Depression assessment, Quality of life, Geriatric care.

INTRODUCTION

Population ageing is an inevitable demographic reality that is associated with improvements in health and medical care system.^[1]

According to Census 2011, India has 104 million older people (60+ years), constituting 8.6% of total population. Amongst the elderly (60+), females outnumber males.^[2]

The elderly age group comprise a particularly vulnerable group as they often have multiple co-existing medical and psychological problems. Cardiovascular diseases, respiratory disorders, hearing and visual impairments, depression, and infections such as tuberculosis are common problems in elderly populations.^[4]

Depression is perhaps the most frequent cause of significantly decreasing quality of life in older adults. Depression in older adults, also called geriatric depression. It is a common and serious mental health disorder characterized by sadness, loss of interest in activities, and a

range of emotional and physical problems.^[5]

Proper diagnosis of depression in the elderly can be difficult, a Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) can be used, it is a self-report developed to measure depression in older adults. The GDS is the mostly widely used measure specific to depression among older populations which has three versions, the GDS-30, GDS-15, and GDS-5.^[7]

Currently, depression is the third leading contributor to the global disease burden but will rise to the first place by 2030.^[10]

India still stands at a pivotal crossroads– facing an ageing population that demands a comprehensive framework of care, new institutions, services, and support dedicated to the evolving needs of the elderly.^[13]

Thus, India has a substantial share of elderly persons with depression. Studies have used various scales and instruments to assess the presence of depression. Early identification and management of depression improves the quality of life.

Estimating burden of depression among elderly persons is necessary for planning public health interventions.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the level of depression among geriatric population at selected urban area, Dholpur, Rajasthan
- To find out the association between the level of depression among geriatric population at selected urban area, Dholpur, Rajasthan with their demographical variables.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A quantitative research approach with a descriptive research design was employed. The study was conducted at Govind nagar, Dholpur, Rajasthan with a sample size of 60 elderly individuals selected through non-probability convenient sampling. Data collection tools include a modified geriatric

depression scale validated by 07 experts, with a reliability coefficient of 0.73. Data were gathered over two weeks and analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to identify associations between level of depression and socio-demographic variables.

Specification of the instrument and related measurement

SECTION A: Socio-Demographic data collection tool

SECTION B: Modified Geriatric Depression Scale

Data collection tools comprised the modified geriatric depression scale for assessing the level of depression. Each question has two responses only, which include "Yes & No". Total 20 question will be asked regarding depression. The scoring criteria were established to quantitatively measure the level of depression, allowing for a systematic and comparative analysis across geriatric population.

RESULT

TABLE NO. 1, Frequency and percentage distribution of socio - demographic variables of geriatric population

S.NO.	SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	
		66-70	17	28%
		71 or above	15	25%
2.	Gender	Male	34	57%
		Female	26	43%
3.	Marital status	Single	13	22%
		Married	30	50%
		Widowed/Divorced	17	28%
4.	Family	Nuclear Family	31	52%
		Joint Family	16	26%
		Living Alone	13	21%
5.	Education Qualification	Primary Education	25	42%
		Secondary Education	16	26%
		Higher Education	11	18%
		Graduate or above	8	13%
6.	Income status	up to 2.5 lac	25	42%
		2.5 – 5 lacs	15	25%
		5 lac – 10 lacs	12	20%
		10 lac or above	8	13%

Table no.1 represents that, the majority of participants 28 (47%) were in the age group of 61–65 years, followed by 17 (28%) in the age group of 66–70 years, and 15 (25%) were aged 71 years or above. With regards to gender, most of the participants were male 34 (57%), while 26 (43%) were female. Regarding marital status, some of the participants 30 (50%) were married, followed by widowed/divorced 17 (28%), and 13 (22%) were single. In terms of family type, the majority 31 (52%) belonged to nuclear families, 16 (26%) lived in joint

families, and 13 (21%) were living alone. Educational qualification shows that most of the participants 25 (42%) had primary education, followed by secondary education 16 (26%), higher education 11 (18%), and graduate or above 8 (13%). With respect to income status, the majority of participants 25 (42%) had an annual income up to 2.5 lakh, followed by 15 (25%) earning 2.5–5 lakhs, 12 (20%) earning 5–10 lakhs, and 8 (13%) having an income of 10 lakhs or above.

TABLE NO. 2, Frequency and percentage distribution according to level of depression of geriatric population

LEVEL OF DEPRESSION	Category	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
No Depression	0-4	42	70%
Mild Depression	5-9	18	30%
Moderate Depression	10-14	0	0
Severe Depression	15-20	0	0

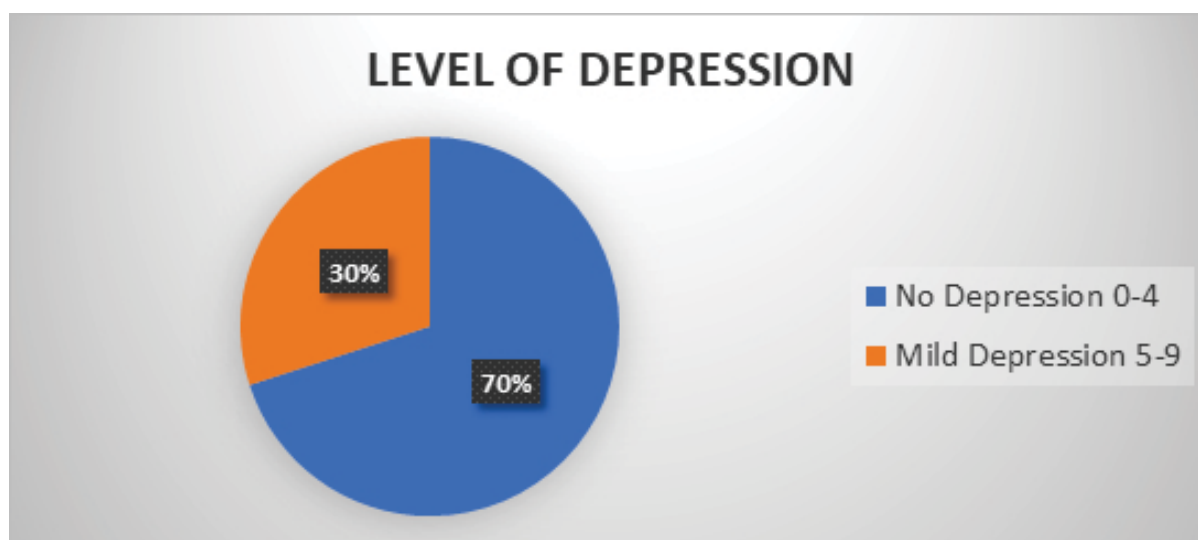


Figure No. 1 Table No. 2, represents the frequency and percentage distribution of level of depression among elderly people. 30% (18) of elderly people have mild depression which are in 5-9 category, 70%(42) of elderly people have no depression which are in 0-4 category and Moderate Depression and severe depression found no values.

TABLE NO. 3, Mean, Median, Mode and Standard deviation of level of depression

S.no.	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard deviation
1.	2.9	2	0	2.949864

Table No. 3, represents the, mean, median, mode and standard deviation of level of depression of geriatric population. In this mean was 2.9, median was 2, mode was 0 and standard deviation was 2.94.

TABLE NO. 4, Represent the association of the level of depression with selected socio - demographic variables of geriatric population

S. NO.	Socio-demographic variable	Categories	"f"	Level of Depression	Calculate d value	df	Tabulated value	LOS@ 0.05	
				No Depression	Mild Depression				
1.	Age	61-65	28	19	9	3.7	2	5.991	N.S.
		66-70	17	14	3				
		71 or above	15	9	6				
2.	Gender	Male	34	23	11	0.649	1	3.841	N.S.
		Female	26	19	7				
3.	Marital Status	Single	13	9	4	0.996	2	5.991	N.S.
		Married	30	21	9				
		Widowed/ Divorced	17	12	5				
4.	Family	Nuclear Family	31	22	9	0.97	2	5.991	N.S.
		Joint Family	16	11	5				
		Living Alone	13	9	4				
5.	Education qualification	Primary Education	25	17	8	0.98	3	7.815	N.S.
		Secondary Education	16	11	5				
		Higher Education	11	8	3				
		Graduate or above	8	6	2				
6.	Income status	up to 2.5 lac	25	18	7	0.921	3	7.815	N.S.
		2.5 – 5 lacs	15	11	4				
		5 lac – 10 lacs	12	8	4				
		10 lac or above	8	5	3				

S. – Significant

N.S. – Non-Significant

L.O.S. – Level of Significance

Df- Degree of freedom

Table No. 4, represents the association of the level of depression with selected sociodemographic variables, the Chi-Square test results indicate that none of the sociodemographic variables such as age, gender, marital status, family type, educational qualification, income status.) have a statistically significant effect on the level of depression

at the 0.05 significance level as the calculated value is less than the tabulated value.

Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis, "There will be no significant association between level of depression among geriatric population with their selected demographical variable at 0.05 level of significance."

DISCUSSION

The present study found that 70% of elderly participants had no depression, while 30% exhibited mild depression, with no cases of moderate or severe depression. This indicates a comparatively lower prevalence of depression in the selected urban area of Dholpur. The findings are lower than those reported by Pilania et al. (2019) and Kumar et al. (2023), but are comparable to the study by Keshari and Shankar (2019). Overall, the present study's comparatively lower prevalence and absence of severe depression may be attributed to factors such as better family support systems, and possibly greater accessibility to basic health services in the urban area.

CONCLUSION

The present study was conducted to assess the level of depression among the geriatric population residing in selected urban areas of Dholpur, Rajasthan. The findings revealed that the majority of elderly participants (70%) had no depression, while 30% exhibited mild depressive symptoms, and no moderate or severe depression was identified.

The study further demonstrated that, socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, marital status, family type, educational qualification, and income status had no statistically significant association with the level of depression. Overall, the findings reinforce the role of nurses in promoting mental health, providing education and support, and contributing to improved quality of life among the ageing population.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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