

Association between Psychosocial Factors and Memory Problems among Elderly

Thesis

Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of
the Master Degree in Nursing Science
(Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing)

By

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AADH	Age Associated Deficit Hypothesis
AARC	Awareness of Age Related Change
ADL	.....	Activities of Daily Living
AMI	.....	Age-Related Memory Impairment
ANA	.....	American Nursing Association
ANAC	.....	American Nursing Association in AIDS Care
APA	.....	American Psychiatric Association
CABG	.....	Coronary Atery bypass Grafting
CBT	.....	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
ECT	.....	Electro Convulsive Therapy
GAD	.....	General Anxiety Disorder
GDS	.....	Geriatric depressive scale
HRQOL	....	Health Related Quality of Life
IADL	.....	Instrumental Activities of Daily Living
LLD	.....	Late Life Depression
LTM	.....	Long Term Memory
MCI	.....	Mild Cognitive Impairment

MDD Major Depressive Disorder

MMSE Mini Mental State Examination

MRI Magnetic Resonance Imaging

NREM Non Rapid Eye Movement

PTSD Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

PSC..... psychosocial condition

REM Rapid Eye Movement

SP Specific Phobia

SSRIS Selective Serotinine Reuptake Inhibitors

STM Short Term Memory

SWS Slow Wave Sleep

WHO World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

The older age group is increasing in size relative to the younger generation. The trend is expected to continue, a time associated with increasing health complications, including depression and cognitive impairment. This study aimed to assess association between memory problems and psychosocial factors among elderly resident in geriatric home. A descriptive design was used. Data were collected from two residential homes (Dar Elamal and El Noor (private home), Dar El Helal (governmental home)).a convenient sample of 50 elderly. Data were collected through: 1) an interview questionnaire sheet to assess socio-demographic characteristics of the elderly. It included socio-demographic data of elderly such as age, sex, and level of education, 2) Mini mental state examination to assess cognitive function and memory problems of the studied sample. 3) Psychosocial condition assessment. Results showed that the majority of the sample have inappropriate psychosocial condition and it showed that more than half of subjects have appropriate memory. Results of this study concluded that, there was no significant relationship between memory problems and psychosocial condition of elderly. The study highlighted the need for further research to assess psychosocial needs of the elderly.

Keywords: Psychosocial factors, memory problems, elderly.

INTRODUCTION

Most research on memory and aging has focused on how older adults perform worse at a particular memory task. However, researchers have also discovered that simply saying that older adults are doing the same thing, only less of it, is not always accurate. In some cases, older adults seem to be using different strategies than younger adults. In addition, older adults sometimes show a positivity effect when remembering information (**Sachs-Ericsson & Blazer, 2015**).

Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) is a stage of decline in memory or other cognitive function greater than expected for normal aging. It is quite common for individuals with MCI to have fluctuations in cognition. Over time, some patients diagnosed with MCI revert back to normal cognition, and some remain mildly cognitively impaired without developing dementia. However, a person with MCI is at increased risk for developing Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia (**Brucki and Nitrini, 2014**).

Nowadays, with the increase in the number of older people there is a need to expect their numbers in order to develop strategies and future plans for them demographic

transition was fast, particularly the rapid decline in mortality rates during the latter half of the twentieth. With century changes in the age structure of population, there is increase in the number of elderly people and decreased trend of their morality rates trend, which is considered as a natural result of reducing of diseases spread among the elderly and the efforts of health care for them (**Yochim et al., 2013**).

Egypt is a lower-middle income country with demographic and epidemiology situation is comparable with that of many developing countries that are in the midst of health transition. However, the annual population growth rate has been brought down to 2% annually, population of Egypt will grow by 50% between 1995 and 2020 reaching 92millions by 2020 this is due to the rapidly growing elderly population (**United Nations, 2015**).

Population aging is the process by which elderly become proportionally larger share of the total population was one of the most distinctive demographic events of the twentieth century. Fifty years later, the number of persons aged 60or over increased about three times to 606 millions. By 2050, the global population 60 or over is projected to expand more than three times, and there will be 101people 60

years or older for every one hundred children 0-14years in the world (**WHO, 2013a**).

Elderly with mild cognitive impairment often exhibit cognitive, behavioral, and functional deficits, however, the symptoms are not widely understood (**Barrios et al., 2012**). Behavioral and psychological signs and symptoms such as depression, anxiety, agitation, disinhibition, aberrant motor behavior, and eating and sleeping disorders are believed to be a manifestation of changes in cognition. Depressive symptoms, however, can manifest a cognitive decline. Therefore, it is important to rule out depression prior to making a diagnosis of dementia (**Van et al., 2014**).

Some memory issues are due to stress, anxiety, or depression. A traumatic life event, such as the death of a spouse, can lead to changes in lifestyle and can leave an elderly person feeling unsure of themselves, sad, and lonely. Dealing with such drastic life changes can therefore leave some people confused or forgetful. While in some cases these feelings may fade, it is important to take these emotional problems seriously. By emotionally supporting a struggling relative and seeking help from a doctor or

counselor, the forgetfulness can be improved (**Eliopoulos et al., 2014**).

The nurse working with elderly should assess psychosocial needs which include cognitive function, financial status, social support systems, interpersonal interaction, coping with multiple losses, and maintaining independence. The mental status examination, one of the most important diagnostic screenings measures available for nurses, is designed to assess mental functioning level and estimate the effectiveness of capacity of elderly (**Hsiao et al., 2014**).

As regard to maintaining cognitive functions and compensating normal aging memory loss among elderly, the nurse should teach the elderly to keep track of dates, schedules, tasks, and phone numbers such as: leaving himself notes, putting appointments and important dates on calendars writing down the steps, If he has trouble remembering how to do something, remembering where the elderly put things such as: putting things he uses regularly (keys, glasses, purse, watch) in the same spot when he is not using them (**Craik & Salthouse, 2013**).

Significance of the study:

Old age has special characteristics that may affect an individual's mental health, such as psychological effects of retirement, deteriorating physical health, loss and grief over previous capacity, loss of friends or family. Loss of interest, diminished social activities, and apathy may be associated with cognitive deficit, and impairment in memory functions. There is also the challenge of memory lapse in the early stages of dementia that may underline the patient's personal report of depressive symptoms. Memory impairment is also associated with difficulties in communication (**Craik, 2012**), hence it's important to investigate the relationship between memory problems and psychosocial factors among elderly in geriatric home.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The overall goal of the study is to assess the association between psychosocial factors and memory problems among elderly.

It was achieved through:

- 1- Assess memory problems among elderly resident in geriatric home.
- 2- Assess psychosocial factors among elderly resident in geriatric home
- 3- Investigate association between memory problems and psychosocial factors among elderly resident in geriatric home.

The aim of the study was achieved through answering the following question:

What is the association between memory problems and psychosocial factors among elderly?