

Nutrition as a Determinant of Depression Level among Aged Women

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Abstract

Objective of the present study was to explore the impact of nutritional statuses on depression level of aged women. Beck depression inventory and inventory of life style were administered on 400 non-working aged women falling between 50 to 65 years of age, all married with alive spouse. Findings reveals that nutritional status and level of depression are significantly related and aged women with poor nutrition status have high level of depression and vise-versa.

Keywords: Nutrition, Depression, Aged Women.

Introduction

Aging is a biological process which can not be controlled by human itself, since its a natural process every human being grows up and comes to the old age. The age of 50 and above is termed as old age in the present study.

Persons face a number of problems like physiological, social, mental and psychological as well. Aged person differ also in terms of their nutritional level. Therefore nutritional level impact their all the problem whether they are physical, social or psychological. In present study, impact of nutritional status is explored on depression level of the respondents.

A number of studies carried out on the same problem in many western countries in the past. Cassidy et al. (2004) have conducted a cross sectional study of community dwelling women aged to years and over. They found that depression is directly associated with heavy smoking and taking alcohol. Bodnar and Wisner (2005) found that nutrition and depression are deeply associated with aged women. More or less a similar results were also obtained by Jonas, et al (1997), Jacka et al. (2009) and Opic et al (2005).

Method of the Study

The sample comprised of 400 non-working aged women falling between 50 to 65 year of age, all married and whose spouse are alive. The aging factor of women is the controlled variable, nutrition factor affecting life style is the independent variables and level of depression was considered as dependent variable.

Tools

The following tools were used.

1. Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)
2. Inventory of Life Style (ILS)

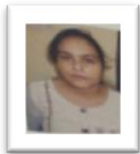
Result & Discussion

In the present study it was hypothesized that nutritional status and level of depression among aging women are essentially unrelated.

To illustrate the use of χ^2 , percentage distribution of 400 aging women who have been categorised into four groups on the basis of their level of depression and into three groups on the basis of their nutritional status. Findings are presented in table 1.

Table-1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents According To their Nutritional Status and Depression Level

Nutritional Status	Depression Level				Total
	Minimal	Mild	Moderate	Severe	
Poor	10.9 (6)	25.5 (14)	29.1 (16)	34.5 (19)	100.0 (55)
Average	16.3 (44)	35.6 (96)	28.1 (76)	20.0 (54)	100.0 (270)
Good	54.6 (41)	28.0 (21)	14.7 (11)	2.7 (2)	100.0 (75)
Total	22.8 (91)	32.7 (131)	25.8 (103)	18.7 (75)	100.0 (400)



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(Actual figures are shown in parentheses)
Chi-Square=66.28464 is significant at .01 level for 6 df.

It is evident from the findings as presented in table-1 that about 65 per cent of the respondents who have moderate and severe level of depression belong to the group of poor nutritional status. Contrary to this, approximately 82 per cent of the respondents who have minimal and mild level of depression belong to the good nutritional status, where as, 63 per cent of the respondents who have mild and moderate level of depression belong to the average nutritional status group. This is the sign of clear indication that nutritional status has a negative relationship with the level of depression. In other words we can say that the respondents of poor nutritional status are more prone to high level of depression and vice versa. Thus it is inferred that nutritional level of the subjects surely influences the level of depression among them. The trend of data also match with social reality. A good nutritional status promotes our physiological and psychological health and a good psysiological and psychological healths are indicative of some positive mental status, like low depression, low axiety and stress and emotional stability. Therefore, the hypothesis fromulated in the present context that "nutritional status and level of depression among aging women are essentially unrelated" is rejected from the present findings.

Aim of the Study

To explore Nutrition determinants of depression specially among old age women.

Conclusion

On the basis of above discussion it can be concluded that-

1. Nutritional status and level of depression are significantly related.
2. Aged women with poor nutritional status have high level of depression and vice versa.

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