

Socio-Economic Status and Cause of Depression among Senior Citizen: An Islamic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was in twofold: first to find out the socio-economic status and to examine the cause of depression among the senior citizens. Therefore, in the light of Islamic teaching, this article examined the causes of depression among senior citizens living in Karachi. A community level, descriptive study was carried out from January 2018 to April 2018 in the different urban populous areas. Hence, a sample of 160 older people was participated in this study after obtaining their informed consent. The data was collected through purposive sampling method from the household survey in six urban communities. The research data was collected through face to face interview schedule guide. However, the on-site observations were also taken by the researcher. The research revealed that due to the weak family system and urbanization, the quality of life and mental health of the elderly has been tremendously affected. In this regards, modernization, weak saving for the elder period of life, the rising cost of medical treatments and medicines, less mobilization due to weak or compromised health status and limited social interaction are reported by the respondent. It was also viewed that ignorance to religious guidelines had played a strong contributory role in the look after of elderly. The results were also proven that those respondents who actively followed the Islamic pattern in their lifestyle have very minimal chances to get invoked in depression.

Keywords: Senior Citizen, Socio- Economic Status, Depression, Islamic perspective, Karachi.

INTRODUCTION

The present study covers the aging problems in the light of Islamic teaching. The researchers have used two different dimensions which included: the socio-economic status of the senior citizen and secondly the analysis of the study had framed under the secondary source and highlights the significance of seniors with reference to depression as a social problem among the elderly. This study has discussed the socio-economic status of the senior citizen and argues the Islamic perspective and sought to identify the most important points for elderly care in the light of Islamic teaching.

If we examine the existing social structure of the family as an institution; it is viewed that there is a transition in the traditional joint or combines family system. This system has been switched into the single-family system. This change in the family system is creating problems, especially for the elderly population. (Syed et al., 2003). Few common older abuse practices prevail in the society, for example, negligence in care, mal-treatment in sickness, disrespectful behavior, and violence (Afzal,1999; Afzal, 2006). It is very communal practices that close and blood relatives, does financial abuse, their resources abuse, and force old people in their own interest, and it's a simple violation of the basic human right and domestic violence with older people (Sijuwade, 1995). Older people are the vulnerable population in Pakistan, because of poverty, aging, without a social safety net. There is very little population working in the private sector as retire persons in Pakistan.

STATUS OF SENIOR CITIZEN: IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAMIC TEACHING:

Islam teaches very clearly that:

“Seek the life to come by means of what God granted you, but do not neglect your rightful share in this world. Do good to others as God has done good to you. Do not seek to spread corruption in the land, for God does not love those who do this” (Quran, 28:77).

Islam as religion was the pioneer to identify and recognized the rights of the elderly in this field (Dover H. 2011). In Islamic culture, the elderly people have a specific status of wisdom and respect. In the Holy Quran, Allah, SWT teach us to be good to our parents; this one specifically highlights how we should treat them in their old age.

“And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you,

say not to them [so much as], “uff,” and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word.” (Qur’an 17:23)

Similarly, at another place, Allah SWT says that:

“And [God says:] ‘We have enjoined upon man goodness towards his parents: his mother bore him by bearing strain upon strain, and his utter dependence on her lasted two years.’” (Qur’an 31:14)

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), was a pioneering example in this field. He taught caring for the elderly regardless of their sex, color, or religion. So, the Prophet Muhammad himself set an abundant model in an enthusiastic manner. In a thorough hadith, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said:

“If a young man honors an elderly on account of his age, Allah appoints someone to honor him in his old age.” (Hadith in At-Tirmidhi)

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also said:

“He is not one of us who does not show mercy to our young ones and esteem to our elderly. (Hadith in At-Tirmidhi).

Allah (SWT) instructs Muslims at many places in the Holy Qur’an that it is the responsibility of children to show the utmost kindness and respect to the parents especially during the old age for instance, in the Holy Quran in verses number 17: 23-24 it has clearly indicated to pay respect to the elders. Currently, there is an emerging concern in Islamic psychotherapy has been developed in Western countries .whereas many Islamic scholars had discoursed the concept this earlier. For instance, Abu Bakar Muhammad Zakaria Al-Razi (925 CE) is the first Muslim physician who introduced the methods of psychotherapy and had written the book entitled ‘El Mansuri’ dan ‘Al Tibb al-Ruhani’ for the treatment of mental health in lieu of Islamic teaching.(Murad, 2002). The Prophet Said that:

“Wondrous is the affair of the believer, for there is good for him in every matter, and this is not the case with anyone but the believer. If he is happy, then he thanks Allah and thus there is good for him. If he is harmed, then he shows patience and thus there is good for him.” (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2999)

Sufism can have helpful therapeutic outcomes on the basis of an innovative counseling model in Islam.(Badri MB,1997; Jaffery,1993).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF SENIOR CITIZEN:

Depression is a common and serious medical illness that is prevalent problems in senior citizen across the country. For those suffering from depression, having a simple conversation can be difficult. They don't feel like making the effort, put their selves out there, and be social. They isolate them and avoid people. They feel like the whole world is against them. They feel rejection and that everyone wants to hurt them. Commonly, people feel unable to trust others. Although they suffered loneliness and feelings of rejection, at the same time they want to be just left alone. They are having poor self-esteem, feeling worthless and lacking confidence. Feeling of guilt is very common they blame themselves for anything goes wrong. In Asian countries, the combined family system is common; which has played a great impact on elders' life. (Kramer EJ et al, 2002).

Pakistan is a South Asian country, having an estimated population of 180 million (Hashami.2003). How countries ever, depression is examined as one of the common health problems among the elderly population across the world. (Biderman A, et al ,1998; Sabina,2012;Kathri,2006). The elder phase of life has a complex period of life (Subzwari, 2010). As an individual there are numerous breathing requirements for this life period, for instance, the socio-economic support and the presences of life partner is the most important need at this stage of life. In the transition period of life many uncertainties, distress like the death of spouse, separation or divorce greatly diminishes their capability to handle the different situations of life. (Taqai, 2007). More importantly, In Pakistan as an Islamic country, male children have been considered as prime sources of social support for older people. (Taqai, 2002).In this regards, those families who do not have any child, their situation becomes more critical with a sense of uncertainty and anxiety which leads to depression. (Mason KO, 1992).

Depression can make it difficult to maintain supportive and fulfilling relationships. The people who are depressed become exhausted with the effort of feeling you need to support your partner and also keeping up with running the house or looking after the rest of the family. The person with depression may begin to feel like a burden as they thought they are making the life of them worse. They may be aware of the effects their depression is having on their relationship, but feel powerless to do

anything about it. This can make them feel guilty and lower their self-esteem even more.

Depression, one of the most common mental health problems, is directly associated with the person who has deteriorated health status. Theoretically, depression is a mental disorder, which affects every aspect of physical health and wellbeing of individuals, especially in the last phase of life. Feeling sad or anxious for a certain time is normal and a part of life, but if these feelings persistently found for a long period then it is the indication of depression. Depression can also cause memory loss. It may also be described as a continuous feeling of fatigue, irresistible despondency, grief emptiness and hopelessness. Depression may have a negative impact on the immune system which tends towards making humans more vulnerable to infections and diseases. In contrary, depression can be a cause for some people for consuming alcohol or drugs. (Green et al.2004; Veen et al 2004), which may increase the occurrences of uncontrolled and abusive behavior.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study, a sample of 160 respondents; elderly from Muslim background were approached by using purposive sampling method in different urban communities in Karachi. Informed consent was taken from the members before their participation in this study. The data was collected through face to face interview. The interview guide has been made for this purpose by the researchers. The purposes of this research were to evaluate the socio-economic status and to find out the cause of depression among the senior citizens. The researchers had made following study objectives for this purpose.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the socio-economic status of elderly people living in Karachi City.
2. To find out the socio-health problems among the elderly people living in Karachi City.
3. To identify the cause of depression among elderly people living in Karachi City.
4. To suggest possible remedies in the light of Islamic Perspective to overcome the depression among elderly people living in Karachi City.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As we have conducted a survey of the socio-economic status of elderly and analysis the rate of depression. We found that there is a rapid increase of depression among the elderly which lead to causes many issues for them to face in their life. We interviewed 160 respondents, belonged to either rural or less developed areas, mostly living in the joint family system (68%) in Karachi with low literacy level in elderly women (19%). We found that due to depression, they are not able to concentrate on their social and personal life. Therefore, it is important to understand concerns regarding socio-economic status and elderly's' mental health. More importantly, recent studies in this area indicate that the psychological and mental problems of the elderly continue to increase.

In this research, it is observed that the elderly had depressive feelings. A number of reasons were reported by the respondent. Majority of the respondent had disclosed that Spouse death, neglect or abuses behavior of family member are the major cause of depression. Moreover, the study participant further disclosed that poor economic status, illness, lack of attention from family members, undesirable diet to eat were also highlighted the cause of depression among them.

We found that due to depression senior citizen is not able to concentrate on their social and personal life. They are not able to create a balance between social and personal life which leads them to cause anxiety and stress. It is revealed that there are many reasons for causing depression in the elderly. Therefore, it is revealed that many elderly people are living with compromise mental health status and physical dependency.

Though, during their entire period of life, human being faces many contradictions and obligations to succeed, especially for improvement in their socio-economic status. Also, many senior citizens do many efforts to embrace new experiences and changes in social aspects, and in behavioral, emotional, spiritual and economic situations. Therefore, it is important to understand the elderly concerns regarding their socio-economic status and mental health status.

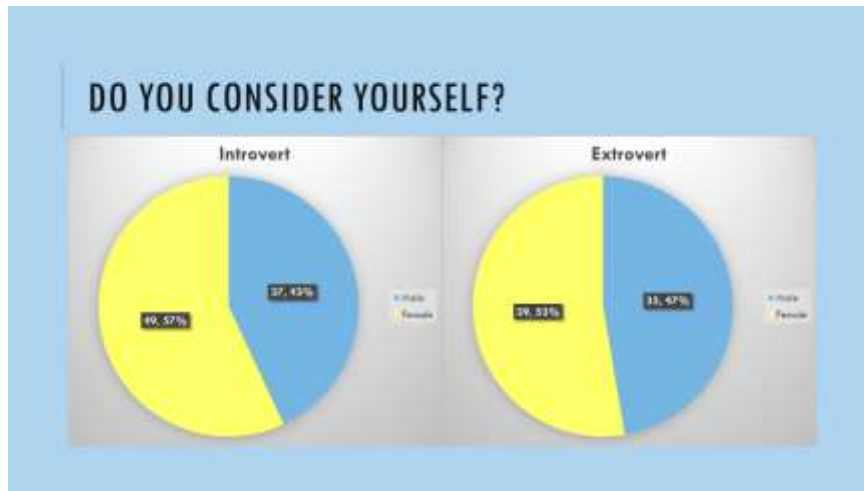


Figure -1

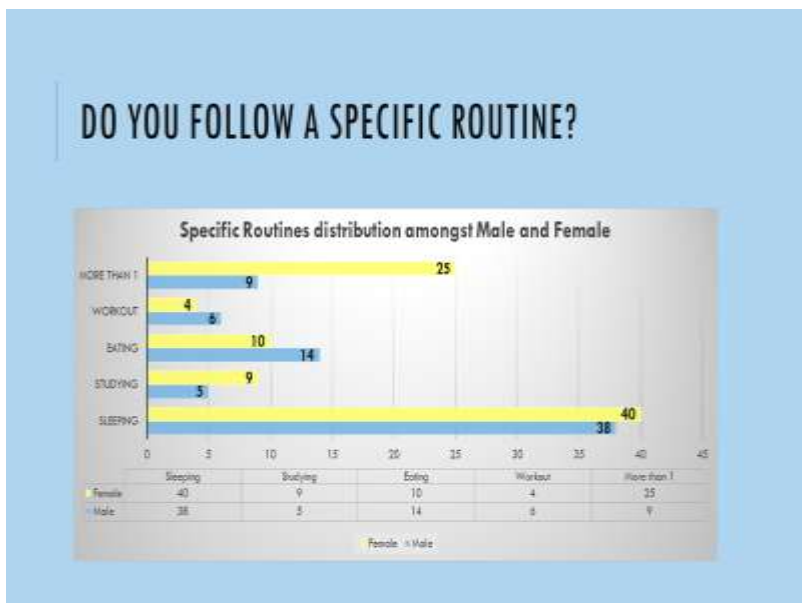


Figure -2

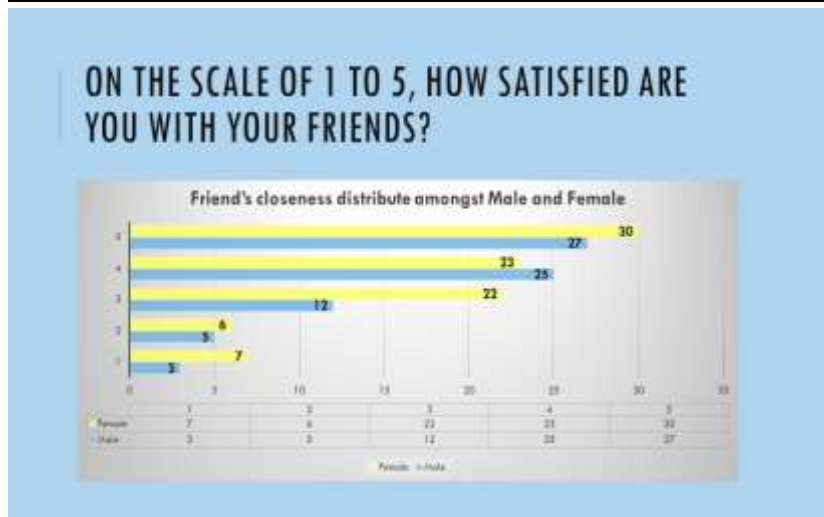


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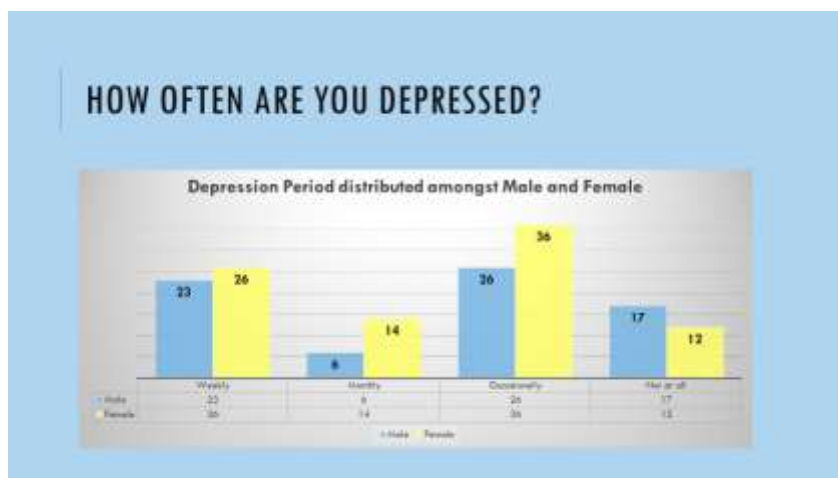


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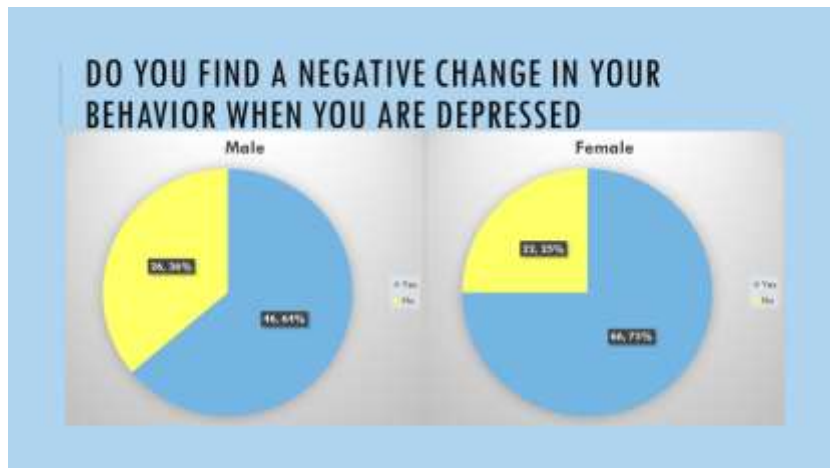


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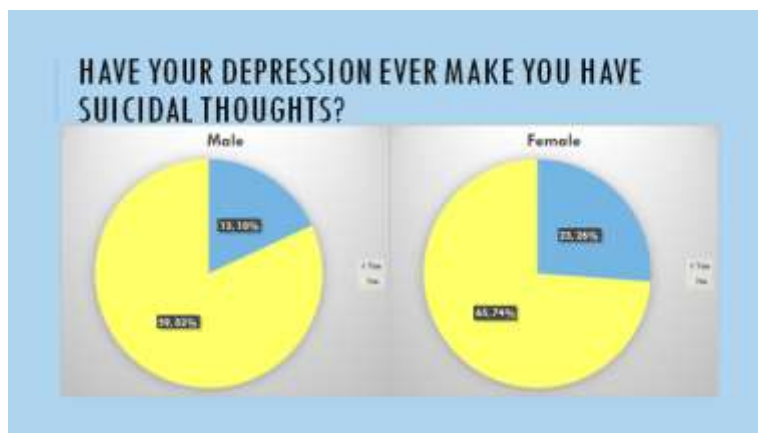


Figure -6

The study has found that there is a positive relationship between the Socio-economic status of the Elderly and the causes of depression (probability is 0.3875 of male elder and in female elder as a probability: 0.875). The situation is even worse in low-income families because of financial constraints. It can analyze from this study that

poor socio-economic status can be the cause of depression thus it is not necessary that these are the only causes but it is highlighted in this study.

CONCLUSIONS

This research has sought socio-economic status and the causes of depression among aged people. Depression poses a major health risk to the elder population in Pakistan. It is time to address these issues and examine its solution in the light of Islamic teaching. Although, socioeconomic status and elder age both are very important and contributing factors of many social problems that exist in our society. This research endorses the availability of Psychotherapy and mental health services for the elderly as on top priority and community counseling services may be introduced at the local level for this purpose. Furthermore, it is also an important responsibility of the religious scholars to emphasis on the rights of the elderly population at different religious gatherings and settings.

RECOMMENDATION

Dealing with depression especially in adult age requires societal attention. In this regards, the following are the few recommendations that:

- Dealing with depression especially in adult age requires societal attention. In this regards, the following are the few recommendations that:
- It is the time to establish support centers for depression especially for senior citizen for reducing their sense of isolation.
- Certainty, weak health status is a painful condition especially for elderly people. Therefore, in these circumstances, it is very important for the family members to interact with an elder patient in their daily routine so that they can keep away from depression.
- It is recommended that organize vocational courses for post-retirement periods and get involve them in social activities.
- This research strongly recommends that appointments of the specific geriatric social worker in the hospitals and in the different non-government organization for their greater social cohesion.
- It is recommended that daycare centers may be functionalized in urban areas for elder socialization.
- It is suggested that there is a need to promote the elder care respect concept in the light of Islamic teaching and integrated this concept in the curriculum, otherwise if

absent or forgetting this concept, the value system will be destroyed. There is a need to continue to enforce and encourage the young generation.

- Any kind of abuse or in any form for being elderly should not be acceptable and against the moral code and law and harassment policies and laws should be introduced and implemented.

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