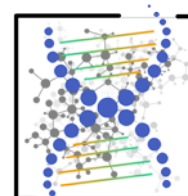


Pharmacophore

ISSN-2229-5402

Journal home page: <http://www.pharmacophorejournal.com>



Pharmacophore
an International Journal
ISSN 2229-4042

ELDER ABUSE IN SAVOJBOLAGH - IRAN

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ARTICLE INFO

Received:

03th Jun 2017

Accepted:

29th Nov 2017

Available online:

14th Dec 2017

Keywords: *Elder Abuse, Savojbolagh, Prevalence*

ABSTRACT

Background and Objective: Elderly age as a sensitive age is the last part of human evolution trend that might be along with numerous physical and psychological problems. One of these problems is experiencing types of abuses that put mental health and quality of life of them at risk.

Materials and Method: The methodology of this study is cross sectional-descriptive. Statistical population consisted of all older people more than age of 65 in Savojbolagh, Iran covering by urban and rural healthcare centers of Savojbolagh. Convenience method was applied as sampling method in which, 400 members were chosen from elder people that they were referred to urban and rural healthcare centers. Sample members filled out elder abuse inventory. The data were analyzed through SPSS22 software.

Findings: The results showed that 80.60% of elders people were victims of types of abuses (0.01); of that, 62.12% experienced neglect, 41.2% emotional abuse, 11.81% physical abuse, 13.73% religious abuse, 4.52% financial abuse, and 1.44% experienced sexual abuse. Also female elders experienced more total kinds of abuse especial neglect 89.12% emotional abuse 68.22%, physical 21.02%, and religious abuse 23.52%. The most prevalent abuses among male older people were related to neglect (0.58), emotional abuse (0.59), and financial abuse (0.97). Also, patient (0.46), without income (0.78), with poor economic status (0.72), widow (0.33), divorced (0.3), illiterate (0.87), and with low literacy (0.84) older people were most subjected to abuse.

Conclusion: Elder abuse has a considerable prevalence in Savojbolagh so that in this research, neglect (62.5%) and emotional abuse (41.2%) had the highest prevalence and sexual abuse (0.41%) had the lowest prevalence in Savojbolagh.

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To Cite This Article: Shahrbanoo Ghahari, Maryam Yekefallah, (2017), "Elder Abuse in Savojbolagh - Iran", *Pharmacophore*, 8(6S), 01-08.

Introduction

Elderly age is considered as the last stage of evolutionary process of human and its population is increasing so that increase in number of this risky age group is considerable in Asia as the more populated continent of the world. More than 50% of world elder people are living in this continent (1). Increased life expectancy and improved quality of life have led to increase in life span; therefore, there is growth in elderly population all around the world and in Iran (2) so that it is considered as one of prominent health and social challenges of countries (3). Elder abuse is defined as any abuse and mistreatment toward elderly person. Elder abuse has different types including emotional, physical, sexual, financial, and religious abuse as well as

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neglect (4). World Health Organization (WHO) estimates the rate of elder abuse equal to 4-6% (5). A study have shown that between 1 and 2 million of American people older than age of 65 experience different types of physical, mental, and financial violence (4) and 2.6% of older people in UK approved that they are abused by their family members and other people (6). Studies show that many of victim older people are not identified ever (7; 8;9).

Elder abuse is one of important health-social challenges in Iran. Prevalence of elder abuse is affected by awareness level of people and older people, their knowledge and readiness of healthcare experts (10). conducted a study and introduced some factors including psychological factors, violence due to the gap between generations, financial dependence to relatives, isolation, unemployment, stress of caregivers, overpopulated family, dementia, and physical disorders as the most factors leading to neglect in older people (11). Also, conducted a study in nursing homes and the results of their study showed that those older people who need long-term care are usually neglected quadruple than other older people. (12)

According to the mentioned points, since statistical indexes indicate increasing growth of elder phenomenon in Iran (13) as well the increasing elder abuse prevalence in society, mistreating older people, lack of exact statistics about mistreatment toward older people in third world countries such as Iran and undetermined level of prevalence of mistreatment toward older people (14), The aim of this study is determining prevalence of elder abuse among elders in Savojbolagh city in Iran.

Method

This is a cross sectional-descriptive study. Statistical population of study consists of all older people more than the age of 65 living in Savojbolagh city and covering by rural and urban healthcare centers. Sampling method was convenience in which, 400 members were chosen out of elders who had referred to rural and urban healthcare centers and filled out the questionnaire of elder abuse with consent. 391 members remained considering incomplete questionnaires.

Instrument

Data collection instrument of this study was a questionnaire consisting of two parts of demographic information and Ghahari elder abuse questionnaire.

Demographic questionnaire consists of some questions including age, gender, education level, marital status, and job status, number of children, housing status, monthly income, psychological disorder, physical inability and disease.

Ghahari Elder Abuse Questionnaire

Ghahari Elder Abuse Questionnaire evaluates 6 dimensions of elder abuse. This questionnaire consists of items 46 based on Likert Scale (always: 3, often: 2, sometimes: 1, never: 0) and it assess severity of abuse.

This questionnaire was conducted by the researcher based on the psychiatric and psychology literature and in -deep interview with 7 psychologists and focused group interview with 16 female elders and 6 male elders in 2015 in Tehran. Face validity of this questionnaire was approved by psychiatrist and psychology professors. Total validity of the scale obtained to 0.863 using Cronbach's alpha and validity of each of components estimated to 0.844, 0.827, 0.776, 0.578, 0.851, and 0.507, respectively.

For assess of reliability of this questionnaire was conducted on a 70-member group of female and male elders (35 members per group) using test-retest method .The results showed that reliability obtained to 0.840 using test-retest method, to 0.780 using Cronbach's alpha, and to 0.064 using split-half method so that these values show the acceptable reliability of questionnaire . Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics including ratio, percentage of absolute and relative frequency using SPSS V.22 Software.

Findings

391 members participated in study in total. Average age older people was equal to 71.6 (\pm 7.33); average number of their children was equal to 5.17 (2.09). 98% and 92% of older people had no physical and psychological problems. Other demographic information of participants is described in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information of abused elder people in Savojbolagh

Variable		N	%
Gender	female	145	36.3
	male	255	63.7
	60 years old and younger	7	1.8
Education	illiterate	225	56.5
	elementary	142	35.7
	secondary	16	4.0
	high school	4	1.0
	diploma	8	2.0
	BA and above	3	8
Marital status	married	256	64.0
	widowed	138	34.5
	divorced	6	1.5
Job	unemployed	52	13.0
	self-employed	217	54.3
	employed	18	4.5
	employee	5	1.3
	housewife	77	19.3
	others	31	7.8
Housing status	private house	357	90.4
	rental house	3	8
	children's house	11	2.8
	city center	24	6.1
monthly income	without income	94	23.7
	less than 500000 toman	46	11.6
	500.000-1.000.000	131	33.0
	1-2 million toman	101	25.4
	more than 2 million toman	25	6.3
disease	no	193	48.3
	heart disease	27	6.8
	musculoskeletal diseases	23	5.8
	Endocrine Conditions	14	3.5
	digestive Disease	26	6.5
	Visual and auditory diseases	3	8
	more than one disease	111	27.8
	cancer	3	8

Results of this study showed that total prevalence of elder abuse in studied population obtained to 80.60%.(0.01). of that 62.12 % experienced neglect, 41.2% emotional abuse, 11.81% physical abuse, 13.73% religious abuse, 4.52% financial abuse, and 1.44% experienced sexual abuse. Intensity of different kinds of elder abuse is shown in Table 2.

Also female elders experienced more total kinds of abuse especial neglect 89.12% emotional abuse 68.22%, physical 21.02%, and religious abuse 23.52%.

Table 2. Intensity and types of elder abuse among older people in Savojbolagh

Elder Abuse		N	Validity %
Total	no	78	19.94
	mild-sometimes	289	80.06
	total	391	100
	Mean±SD	7.39±8.87	
Emotional	no	230	58.8
	mild-sometimes	152	38.9
	average-often	9	2.3
	total	391	100
	Mean±SD	2.17±4.8	
physical	no	345	88.02
	mild-sometimes	45	11.5
	average-often	1	0.3
	total	391	100
	Mean±SD	0.55±0.17	
Neglect	no	147	37.6
	mild-sometimes	238	60.9
	average-often	6	1.5
	total	391	100
	Mean±SD	2.28±3.01	
Sexual	no	385	98.56
	mild-sometimes	6	1.44
	total	391	100
	Mean±SD	1.28±0.94	
Religious	no	342	87.20
	mild-sometimes	37	10.93
	average-often	12	2.80
	total	391	100
	Mean±SD	2.42±1.96	
Financial	no	373	96.93
	mild-sometimes	16	4.0
	average-often	2	0.5
	total	391	100
	Mean±SD	0.46±0.80	

The most prevalent abuses among male older people were related to neglect (0.58), emotional abuse (0.59), and financial abuse (0.97).

Also, patient (0.46), without income (0.78), with poor economic status (0.72), widow (0.33), divorced (0.3), illiterate (0.87), and with low literacy (0.84) older people were most subjected to abuse.

Discussion

According to Table 1, findings of present study show that majority of participants were male (63.7%), illiterate (56.5%), married (64%) and self-employed (54.3%) who were living in their private houses (90.4%) with monthly income of 500.000-1.000.000 toman (33%) that had more than two diseases (27.8%).

According to table 2, prevalence of total elder abuse estimated to 80.60 that is matched with the value (87%) obtained in study conducted by Tajer et al. (2011). Older people in Savojbolagh experienced the most mistreatment with neglect type (62.4%), emotional abuse (41.2%), religious abuse (13.73%), physical abuse (11.8%), financial abuse (4.50%), and sexual abuse (1.44%) (0.01).

High prevalence of neglect among older people in Savojbolagh (62.4) is in line with the value obtained in studies conducted by (15, 16, 1, 17, 18, 13, 19, 14, 20). This research finding can be explained that specific social conditions, change in traditional values, and urbanism life have led to poor role of families toward older people, in particular in a country like Iran that is in transient stage. Caregivers of older people have to had several jobs at the same time due to their life problems and issues; therefore, mental pressures caused by job life and environment have reduced the power of families to spend time with their older members so that older people experience neglect increasingly.

Physical abuse rate among older people in Savojbolagh is reported to 11.6% that this result is matched with the study of Berg et al. (2012) conducted on nursing homes to study mistreatment imposed against older people; In this study, constraint in daily activities of life, behavioral problems of older people, and hitting older people in nursing homes were introduced as the most prevalent options in physical mistreatment. Also, mistreatment value toward older people estimated to 10.5% in study conducted by (14) that this result is in line with the value obtained in present study. This result is also matched with the result obtained from a trans-analysis (2008) conducted in field of mistreatment against older people in which, 25% of older people had experienced physical mistreatment in this life.

In present study, older people of Savojbolagh experienced 4.50% financial abuse while this value obtained to 14.35 in study conducted by Hosseini et al. (2016), to 25% in study of Karimi, and to 10% in another study quoted from (14). This financial abuse has happened in form of borrowing and refusing to pay back the debt and forced to sign a document or contract.

Limitation and Recommendations: The limitation is that elder abuse has been just assessed in Savojbolagh so it is recommended considering other communities and cities that have older people and comparing its results with results of present study. Some recommendations are presented to prevent from elder abuse problem in Iran

- 1- Education to families about sign and symptoms of elder abuse.
- 2- The older persons should be aware from abuse and health consequences
- 3- People should be encouraged to follow religious values for prevent elder abuse.
- 4- Also, some studies should be conducted to examine effect of types of educational interventions on families regarding reduction in elder abuse problem.

Acknowledgement:

Authors of this research appreciate all older people and health centers staffs who participated in this study.

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