



PROFILE OF GERIATRIC PATIENTS IN PSYCHIATRY CLINIC DURING CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT **BACKGROUND:** Elderly are at disproportionate risk of psychiatric morbidity and mortality due to novel corona virus (COVID -19) pandemic. **OBJECTIVE:** To find out the incidence of different psychiatric morbidities in elderly population. **METHOD:** Retrospective file review in general psychiatry clinic at Indore which included all new patients of 60 years and above. Diagnosis was noted as per ICD 10 criteria. **RESULTS:** Majority of the patients were Males. 65% belonged to 60-69 years age group. Almost 50% were from districts other than Indore. 60% were suffering from Depression & Neurotic stress related disorders followed by Schizophrenia (20%). Among physical co morbidities Cardio vascular disorders were commonest. **CONCLUSION:** The data will help in focussing on awareness and measures needed for high risk elderly population.

KEYWORDS : Geriatric Patients, Corona Virus

INTRODUCTION

COVID 19 is a pandemic with global threat. Certain sections of the society are at clearly defined and increased risk. Geriatric age group being one of them.¹ Preliminary research and surveys have shown increased incidence of mental health disorders in elderly.² Only few studies have addressed the psychiatric impact on elderly population in India. This study is intended to find psychiatric morbidity in the elderly during the pandemic.

AIM

To assess the clinical and demographic profile of geriatric patients attending general psychiatry clinic.

METHODOLOGY

The present retrospective analysis involved all new geriatric patients (60 years and above) who attended general psychiatry private clinic at Indore between 1st June 2020 to 31st October 2020 (Corona Pandemic). Case records were assessed in detail regarding demographic and clinical parameters. The diagnosis was recorded as per ICD 10 criteria.³ After review descriptive statistic was used to summarize the number, age, gender and diagnosis of the patients.

RESULTS

TABLE 1 AGE AND GENDER DISRRIBUTION OF GERIATRIC PATIENTS

S.NO	Age Group (Years)	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1	60 - 64	19	13	32	53.33
2	65 -69	6	1	7	11.67
3	70 -74	6	3	9	15
4	75 -79	3	2	5	8.33
5	>= 80	5	2	7	11.67
Total		39	21	60	

TABLE 2 LOCALITY DISTRIBUTION

Category	Variation	Frequency	Percentage
Locality	Indore District	31	51.67%
	Other Districts	29	48.33%

Majority of the patients were Males. Most of the patients were between 60- 69 years age group (65%). Almost equal patients belonged to districts other than Indore.

TABLE 3 DISTRIBUTION OF PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS

S.NO	Diagnosis (ICD 10)	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1	Dementia Organic Brain damage and dysfunction	5	4	9	15%
2	Schizophrenia	7	4	11	18.33%
3	Mood Disorders				
3A	Depressive Episode	20	10	30	50%
3B	Recurrent Depressive disorder				
3B	Bipolar Mania	1	0	1	1.67%
4	Neurotic & Stress related	4	2	6	10%
5	Sleep Disorders	2	1	3	5%

Table 3 shows Depression as the most common diagnosis (50%) followed by Schizophrenia (18.33%), Dementia and organic disorders (15%), Neurotic and Stress related (10%), Sleep disorders (5%) & Bipolar Mania (1.67%)

TABLE 4 COMORBID PHYSICAL ILLNESSES

S.NO	Illness	Number
1	Metabolic Disorders, Diabetes	15
2	Cardiovascular, Hypertension, Myocardial infarction	20
3	C.N.S, Stroke, Seizures ,Parkinsonism	9
4	Endocrinal, Hypothyroidism	1
5	Respiratory	2
6	Musculoskeletal	2

Table 4 shows most of the patients have one or more than one physical co morbidities. Cardio vascular disorders were commonest followed by Metabolic and Neurological disorders.

DISCUSSION

Total 400 patients attended the general psychiatry clinic in Indore during the study period out of which case records of 60 geriatric patients (60 years and above) were reviewed. The incidence of psychiatric morbidity was 15%. It was higher than the usual percentage of elderly patients attending clinic without Corona virus pandemic.⁴ Studies by Singh R et al have evaluated age structured impact of lockdown in India showing increase psychosocial burden above age of 50 years.⁵

65% of the study patients belonged to age group of less than 70 years. Almost 50% of the patients belonged to districts other than Indore. It may be due to uneven geographical and spatial distribution of health care services, insufficient availability and difficulty obtaining information.⁶

In the study 60% of the patients reported Depressive episode and Neurotic & stress related disorders. High incidence of these disorders could be due to biopsychosocial vulnerabilities from medical co morbidities, functional limitations, social distancing, loneliness, cognitive deficits, difficulty in digital connectivity and regular exposure to misinformation.⁷⁻¹¹

Around 20% cases of Schizophrenia were reported in the study population. Similar findings were reported by Brown E et al & Hu W et al in their studies during COVID 19 pandemic.^{12,13} It may be due to change in the mean age for patients newly diagnosed with schizophrenia. Even information overload can lead to paranoia.¹⁴

No gender differences were observed in the distribution pattern of disorders

High level of co morbid physical illness (cardiovascular, metabolic ,

C.N.S disorders) have been reported. Other studies have similar findings, these medical conditions can potentially affect the prognosis of patients with Covid 19.¹⁵

The limitation of the study is its retrospective design. A prospective study using structured questionnaire would better account for pattern of psychiatric comorbidity.

Intervention and preventive measures can reduce the risk of psychiatric disorders in elderly. It should be like expanding telehealth services , healthy contacts with family, relevant and updated information, respecting their personal space and dignity and updation of Indian Pandemic Act 1897.

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