Short Communication

Depression among Elderly in India: An Iceberg Phenomenon

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Based on World Health Organization (WHO) age of 60 years and above sixty year are considered elderly, during 2001 census in India overall constitution of elderly is 7% and elderly population is increased by 2016 and it is 8% [1], overall proportion of the elderly population in world was 5.8% during 2000 and it is expected to increase to 8.7% by the year 2025 and 15.0% by the year of 2050 [2]. Almost all the system of the body is affected by ageing and aging involved with several physicals, metabolic and psychosomatic changes. There are many physiological changes which include the decline in physical activity, metabolism, digestion, bone mass and muscle mass. Common physiological problem includes failing eyesight and hearing problem, anorexia due to loss of taste, perception of smell, dental problems, gastro intestinal track changes, constipation and decreased physical activity could lead to overall decrease of food intake and poor absorption of nutrients [3], because the physical health consequences disease is predicted immediately but always mental health problem will be an iceberg phenomenon. Nowadays mental health gaining major attention. There are many studies which reveal that depression/Psychological symptoms are more common among female than male; the feeling of depression among females was 2.31 times higher than males [4,5]. Depression is a sickness considered by persistent sadness and a lack of interest in previous interesting activities that you normally enjoyed before, escorted by failure to carry out the day-today activities, for at least two weeks [6]. Many people experience depression in old age [7], it's an emerging problem which is leading to morbidity and disability in worldwide [8,9]. There are list of risk factor for depression which includes Ageing, Gender (Female has higher risk) [4] Illiteracy, disability, recent bereavement, low-income family, poverty, poor health Status, cognitive impairment, sleep pattern/disturbance, living alone, previous experience of depression, medical illness are found by systematic review and meta-analysis [9-11]. Some of the study in India proved that Monthly family income below Rs. 1100, experienced hunger within past 30 days, poverty, higher age, living alone, nuclear family, illiterates, having four or more confidants, history of diabetes mellitus, history of transient ischemic attack, history of cardiac illness, history of head injury with LOC are the major factor, associated with elderly depression and depression is the very common psychiatric disorder but depression among elderly is not yet perceived as an imperative public health problem [8,12,13]. Still mental health problems, especially depressive disorders are remains like an iceberg phenomena because very often the depression goes undiagnosed and elderly people are not seeking and utilizing the health care, ignorance of the symptoms all so will take place [13]. Depression among elderly lower the productivity and it increases the money which spends on health care among the family members [14] and to commit suicide depression is most reason among elderly [11], by giving health education to the community at primary level will help, giving more love, care for the elderly, improvise the health status of an elderly [13,15]. The community members and health professional need greater awareness to detect the depression [16].

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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