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Dr. Anindita Dey
Department of Human
Development Acharya Prafulla
Chandra College, New
Barrackpore, North 24 Parganas,
West Bengal, India

Depression among elderly residents of Kolkata: A comparative study on pre retirement and post retirement conditions of elderly

Dr. Anindita Dey

Abstract

Depression is the most common problem of the elderly. In the present scenario of the migration of the youth, retirement, loneliness and other causative factors lead to depression among elderly residents of Kolkata. Keeping this backdrop in mind the study emphasized on the pre – retirement and the post - retirement conditions of the elderly mainly living in Kolkata. The population of the study comprised of one hundred elderly belonging to two age groups (55 – 65 years and 65 – 75 years). The Beck Depression Inventory was used to find out their level of depression. Correlation coefficients were calculated to find out the effect of age and retirement condition on the two age groups. The t – test was also performed to find out the difference between the samples of the study. The present study will therefore help us to conclude whether the elderly suffer from depression, the causative factor being retirement and the methods that can be undertaken to eradicate such problems from the lives of the senior citizens.

Keywords: Depression, pre – retirement, post – retirement, beck depression inventory, correlation coefficient

1. Introduction

Depression is a common problem in older adults. And the symptoms of elderly depression can affect every aspect of your life, impacting your energy, appetite, sleep, and interest in work, hobbies, and relationships. Depression isn't a sign of weakness or a character flaw. It can happen to anyone, at any age, no matter your background or your previous accomplishments in life. While life's changes as you age—such as retirement, the death of loved ones, declining health—can sometimes trigger depression, they don't have to keep you down. No matter what challenges you face as you age, there are steps you can take to feel happy and hopeful once again and enjoy your golden years. While depression and sadness might seem to go hand and hand, many depressed seniors claim not to feel sad at all. They may complain, instead, of low motivation, a lack of energy, or physical problems. In fact, physical complaints, such as arthritis pain or worsening headaches, are often the predominant symptom of depression in the elderly. Overcoming depression involves finding new things you enjoy, learning to adapt to change, staying physically and socially active, and feeling connected to your community and loved ones. The elderly population is large in general and growing due to advancement of health care education. These people are faced with numerous physical, psychological and social role changes that challenge their sense of self and capacity to live happily. Many people experience loneliness and depression in old age, either as a result of living alone or due to lack of close family ties and reduced connections with their culture of origin, which results in an inability to actively participate in the community activities. With advancing age, it is inevitable that people lose connection with their friendship networks and that they find it more difficult to initiate new friendships and to belong to new networks. The present study was conducted to investigate the relationships among depression and retirement in elderly people. The number of older people is increasing throughout the world. As individuals grow older, they are faced with numerous physical, psychological and social role changes that challenge their sense of self and capacity to live happily. Depression and loneliness are considered to be the major problems leading to impaired quality of life among elderly persons. It can be happy and winsome or empty and sad — depending largely on the faith and grace of the person involved.

Correspondence
Dr. Anindita Dey
Department of Human
Development Acharya Prafulla
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Barrackpore, North 24 Parganas,
West Bengal, India

Therefore, the present study was undertaken with the main purpose of studying the relationships among depression and retirement in elderly people.

2. Method

2.1 Objectives

To find out whether the elderly suffer from depression, due to retirement.

2.2 Hypothesis

Whether depression is positively and significantly related to retirement.

2.3 Sample

To compare the levels of depression of elderly persons of two genders and the age group (55 – 65 years and 65 – 75 years), different marital statuses and types of residence etc were selected.

- Purposive sample of 50 male and 50 female Bengali, Hindu elderly in the age group of 55 – 65 years and 65 – 75 years were selected. All the subjects were of the middle socio-economic status.
- All of them stayed in Kolkata.
- Elderly people irrespective of their marital status were included in the samples.

2.4 Variables

Table 1

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable
Age	Depression Scores
Gender	Retirement Status

2.5 Tools Used

An Investigator made questionnaire to understand the occupational condition of the elderly, including the Beck Depression Inventory to find out the depression scores was used.

Beck depression inventory (Beck et al., 1961) [1,2]

The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) is a 21-item self-report scale measuring supposed manifestations of depression. The internal consistency for the BDI ranges from 0.73 to 0.92, with a mean of 0.86. The BDI demonstrates high internal consistency, with alpha coefficients of 0.86 and 0.81 for psychiatric and nonpsychiatric populations, respectively. The scale has a split-half reliability coefficient of 0.93.

2.6 Method of Statistical Analysis

At the outset the percentage of the answer options endorsed by different categories of elderly were calculated and compared.

Incase of Beck Depression Inventory, mean depression scores and standard deviations for the said categories of elderly were computed, t- tests was carried out to find out significant differences between them, if any.

3. Result and Discussion

Table 1: Gender Wise Segregation of the Sample

Gender	Working	Retired	Home Maker	Total
Men	25(50%)	25(50%)	0(0%)	50(100%)
Women	5(10%)	5(10%)	40(80%)	50(100%)

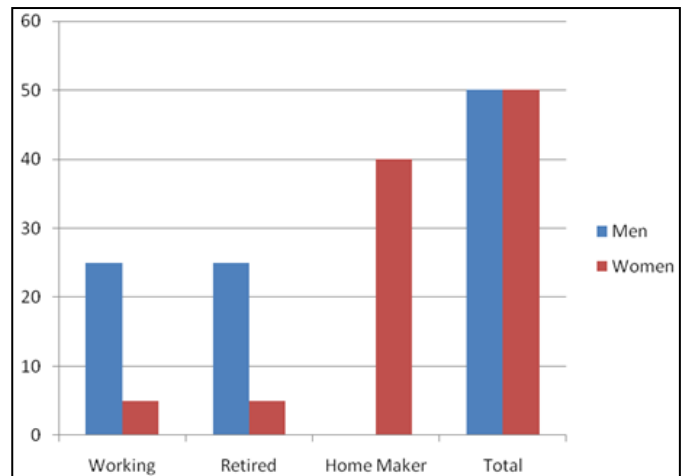


Fig 1

Table 1 and Figure 1 shows that 50% of the men are working and the rest are retired. In case of women 40% are home makers and the rest 20% (10+10) are working and retired respectively.

Table 2: Age Wise Segregation of the Sample

Gender	Age	
	55 - 65years	65 - 75years
Men	25(50%)	25(50%)
Women	25(50%)	25(50%)

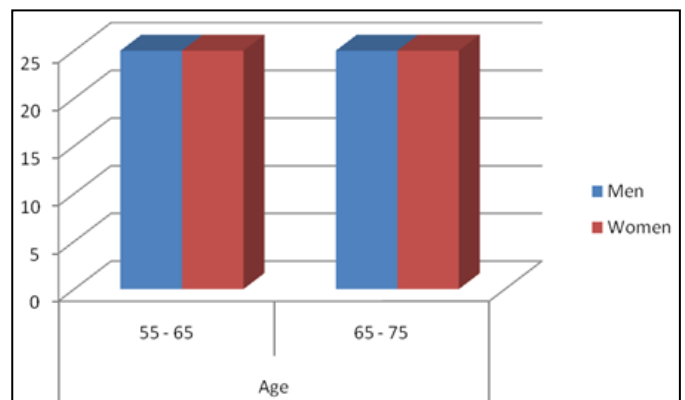


Fig 2

In the table and the figure it is clear that 50% (25% Men, 25% Women) are from the age group 55 – 65 years and 50% (25% Men, 25% Women) are from the age group 65 – 75 years.

Table 3: Marital Status of the Sampled Elderly

Marital Status	Men	Women	Total
Unmarried	9(18%)	12(24%)	21(42%)
Married with Spouse alive	26(52%)	21(42%)	47(97%)
Widow	N.A.	14(28%)	14(28%)
Widower	15(30%)	N.A.	15(30%)
Divorcee	0(0%)	3(6%)	3(6%)
Total	50	50	100

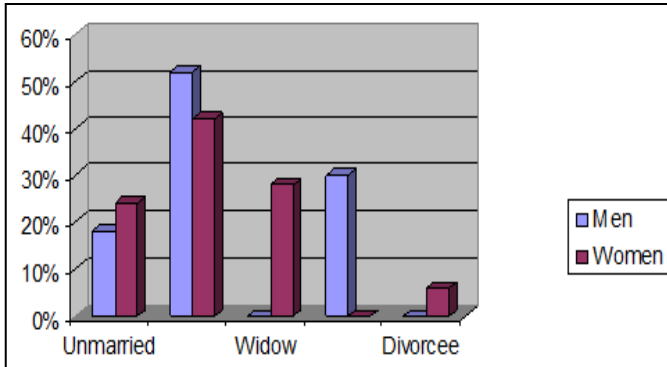


Fig 3

It is clear from the table and the figure that most of the men and women are married with their spouse alive (52% men, 42% women).

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation Values of Depression Scores

Respondents	Mean	S.D.
Elderly Men	23.5	3.2
Elderly Women	19.6	2.1
Retired Elderly Men	25.1	2.8
Working Elderly Men	18.9	2.4
Retired Elderly Women	19.8	2.2
Working Elderly Women	18.8	2.3

From observation of Table 4, it is clear that the Depression scores is more or less same on the average for the subjects. The standard deviation values reported in the Table are moderate indicating that the scores of the entire sample (N = 100) and the gender – groups are more or less homogeneous.

Table 5: Results of t-test: Differences between mean depression scores of two groups (working, retired)

t obt	Df	T crit .05	t crit .01	Decision
6.7	98	1.66	2.36	Significant at .05 and .01 levels

The table shows the result of the t – test of the working and the retired elderly irrespective of gender. It is clear from the table that the mean depression scores are positively and significantly related to the retirement conditions of the elderly that is pre – retirement and post – retirement. It can be said that elderly are more likely to suffer from depression post – retirement rather than pre – retirement.

4. Conclusion

The health and well-being of older adults is affected by the level of social activity and the mood states. Researchers have reported the negative effects of depression on health in old age. Depression, coupled with other physical and mental problems, gives rise to feelings of isolation in the elderly persons. Gender differences have been reported in the prevalence of health problems in elderly persons due to

depression. Results in Table 5 reveal that there are significant impact of pre – retirement and post – retirement conditions on the elderly persons with respect to depression, both the male and female elderly persons equally experience feelings of depression after retirement. This may have been due to the fact that all the elderly men belonged to the working group, i.e., they were employed in government jobs before retirement and were hesitant in socializing. Having both the intellectual and social resources allows elderly men to continue to seek out new relationships. Since both the groups contained elderly married couples, with both partners being alive, the chances of their feeling lonely were low. Thus enjoying the company of the spouse and exploring new avenues could be the possible solution to the problem of depression post retirement.

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