

Psychological Pain among Elderly during Corona Pandemic in Jerusalem

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to identify the psychological pain among Jerusalem's elderly over the age of 65. The sample of the study consisted of 80 elderly people. To achieve the study's goals, the descriptive approach and psychological pain scale were used. The findings revealed a moderate level of psychological pain among Jerusalem's elderly. Furthermore, there were statistically significant differences due to academic qualification in favor of university and higher degree. The findings also revealed differences attributable to the gender variable in favor of males, whereas there were no statistically significant differences due to the number of children variable. This means that the pandemic caused additional psychological pain in the lives of the elderly.

Key words: Psychological Pain, Elderly, Old People, Corona Pandemic

Introduction:

Covid-19 infection is fatal; additionally, quarantine and a lack of communications with others are stressful factors that influence an individual's life, affecting his psychological state, state of alignment, and adaptation with himself on the one hand and with his environment on the other hand. The Corona pandemic exposed all groups of societies to unprecedented change in a short period of time, a forced change in their lifestyle, with ramification for health-care systems in all countries of the world (Viswanatli, A, Monga, P, 2020). This resulted in several serious psychological factors that cause the inconsistency of the psychological, social, and healthy health for many society classes, particularly the elderly, as well as increased fears on this group as a

result of the impact of Corona pandemic (Covid-19) on their psychological health. Furthermore, the elderly may have inner conflicts or external disputes with community members. These conflicts and crises lead to a lack of personal and psychological consistency, making them psychologically painful and instable (Rimawi, & Ibrahim, 2020; Jaballah et al., 2021).

According to Raheem (2007), psychological pain among the elderly arises from the health worries caused by the deterioration in the body's building that they experience as they age (Jaballah et al., 2021). With the rapid spread of the Covid-19 virus, which affected all countries without exception,

individuals and their families became confused, and anxiety spread among many of them, particularly the elderly (Al-Wahibiya, 2020), thus, this virus left broken souls and established new patterns of humans. It also caused a painful psychological condition that is practically universal throughout the world (Turay, 2020), thus this pandemic filled a large space in human thought, and in the shape of an existential danger, which calls for cases of anxiety, psychological pain and panic (Aten, 2020).

According to a number of reports, some countries refuse to offer health treatment to the elderly; they prioritize younger patients who have better chance of life, for example, they prioritize utilizing ventilators for young people, leaving the elderly to face their destiny (Arar, 2020).

According to the findings of Kassemi and Fadili (2021), the elderly dwelling in Algerian retirement homes have a high level in styles of dealing with psychological stress associated with the transmission of the Corona virus (COVID-19). Furthermore, there were no statistically significant differences based on the gender variable. Whereas Youssef (2020) reported that (68.8%) of housewives are concerned about being infected by the emerging corona virus. The results of Al-Ajmi and Al-Otaibi (2021) revealed that a high level of health commitment among members of Kuwaiti society. The findings of their study also indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in the level of health commitment attributable to the variables of gender and academic qualification, but there were statistically significant differences in the level of health commitment due to the age variable in favor of the age group (40-50 years).

Hassan (2020) discovered a high level of social anxiety among the elderly due to the

prevalence of the emerging Corona virus "Covid-19", whereas Tarawneh (2021) found that the prevalence of death anxiety among a sample of the elderly in Jordan was (52.19%), as well as there were statistically significant differences between the elderly due to the gender (males and females) in favor of males. According to Rimawi and his colleagues (2015), the illiterate elderly have more psychological and social needs than the elderly with higher academic qualification.

Instead of assisting the elderly to enjoy a safe, dignified, and healthy life, the Corona virus has exacerbated violence, abuse, and neglect of the elderly all over the world (Al-Sharqawi, 2020). The current study aimed to shed light on the elderly's needs, such as their need for direct care more than others, as well as addressing their needs so they may continue their lives as members of the society and are never forgotten or ignored.

Method and Procedures:

Method:

To achieve the goals of this study, the researcher used the descriptive approach. It is defined as a method that investigates an existing phenomenon, event or issue to acquire information that answers the research questions without the intervention of the researcher, and through which we attempt to describe the phenomenon under investigation.

Population and sample of the study:

The study's population comprised all the elderly in Jerusalem City above the age of 65 years. The study's sample included (80) elderly, male and female, who were selected using the purposive sampling method. Table (1) depicts the distribution of the elderly participants whose responses were analyzed based on demographic variables.

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Table 1. Distribution of the elderly participants based on the study's demographic variable.

Variable	Level	(n)	%
Academic qualification	Elementary and less	23	.882
	Secondary	35	43.8
	University and higher	22	27.4
Number of children	No children	4	5.0
	1-3 children	14	17.5
	3-5 children	22	27.5
	6 children and more	40	50.0
Gender	Male	39	48.8
	Female	41	51.2

Instrumentation:

After reviewing a number of prior researches and their instruments, as well as the educational studies related to the issue of the current study, the scale of Al-Kubaisi and Al-Obaidi (2015) was used, it consisted of 30 items. The participants were subjected to the instrument. After collecting the questionnaires from the participants and ensuring that they were accurately completed, it was found that only (80) questionnaires were valid to be statistically analyzed. The questionnaire items were scored on a 1-5 scale (from 1=Not at all to 5= Absolutely)

Instrument Validity:

The validity of the study's instruments was verified by calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient for each item with the total score of the instrument. All of the

scale's items exhibited statistical significance, indicating that there was internal consistency between them.

Instrument reliability:

To validate the instrument reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability equation was calculated. The total score of psychological pain among Jerusalem's elderly was (0.92), demonstrating that this instrument is reliable and fits the study's goals.

Data Analysis:

The means and standard deviations were extracted for each item of the scale after verifying the validity and reliability of the study's instrument and ensuring its validity for statistical analysis using Cronbach Alpha, t-test, One Way ANOVA, the statistical packages (SPSS).

Results:

The study's findings revealed a moderate level of psychological pain among the elderly in Jerusalem, where the item "I expect failure" got the highest average,

followed by the item "I went through difficult situations that made me wish to die" while the lowest ratio was for the item "I see that the law is applied only against simple people of the people"

Table 2. Results of (One Way ANOVA) test of the elderly participants' responses in Jerusalem City based on the academic qualification variable.

Academic qualification	No.	Mean	SD	Value (F)	Sig
Elementary and less	23	2.40	0.75	4.37	0.01
Secondary	35	2.48	0.74		
University and higher	22	2.95	0.48		

Table (2) shows that (F) value of the total score was (4.37) and the significance level was (0.01) which is less than the significance level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$), indicating that

there were statistically significant differences attributable to the academic qualification variable in favor of university and higher.

Table 3. Results of (One Way ANOVA) test of the elderly participants' responses in Jerusalem City based on the number of children variable.

Number of children	No.	Mean	SD	Value (F)	Sig
No children	4	2.28	0.41	0.45	0.71
1-3 children	14	2.64	0.67		
3-5 children	22	2.51	0.72		
6 children and above	40	2.65	0.74		

Table (3) reveals that the (F) value of the total score was (0.45) and the significance level was (0.71) which is more than the

significance level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$), suggesting that the number of children variable had no statistically significant differences due to.

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Table 4. Results of (t-test) of the elderly participants' responses in Jerusalem City based on the gender variable

Gender	No.	Mean	SD	Value (T)	Sig
Male	39	2.83	0.71	3.04	0.00
Female	41	2.36	0.63		

Table (4) demonstrates that the value of "T" of the total score (3.04), and the level of significance (0.00), indicating that there were differences due to the gender variable in favor of males.

Discussion:

The findings of current study revealed a moderate level of psychological pain among the elderly in Jerusalem. This is due to the fact that the elderly in Jerusalem are having difficulty, during the pandemic, coping with the psychological, social, and economic changes that occur to them at this age stage, as well as dealing with the reality on a daily basis, this change has effect on their psychology. The findings also demonstrated differences in the psychological pain among elderly based on the academic qualification in favor of university and higher qualification. We believe that their grief stems from their educational position and the distinctive social rank, but the changes that occurred to them were caused by their physical weakness, incapacity to face this pandemic, and the sense of failure towards it. The findings also showed that there were no differences in the level of psychological pain among the elderly in Jerusalem due to the number of children variable. This result can be explained that

whether the elderly had one child or more than that, it will not affect them.

The elderly see that they have become unable to aid themselves or anybody else, and have permitted some of the neglect they experience from people around them. The results did not show any differences in the level of psychological pain among the elderly in Jerusalem attributable to the gender variable in favor of males. This result means that males have a responsibility to their wives and children, as well as a social responsibility represented by the society's perception of them, which increases the burden on them and causes them to constantly think about themselves and those around them so that the new stage does not affect them. Males are typically less expressive of their feelings than females. As a result, their psychological pain is exacerbated. Furthermore, culture emphasizes devoting more attention to mothers than fathers.

Conclusion:

It was found that the elderly feel pain, it also showed that the level of psychological pain was moderate, and this indicated that the elderly during this pandemic had additional burden to their lives, particularly males, and they felt that the country disappointed them, namely the educated elderly who served the

country throughout their lives, this feeling is caused by the neglect they feel from people around them.

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