Elder abuse: Risk factors of abuse in Iranian elderly community dwelling

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Elder abuse:

- Recognized with serious consequences for health and wellbeing,
- Supposed as a problem of domestic violence or a form of inter-family conflict in many societies (Podnieks, et al., 2010 & Garre-Olmo et al., 2009),
- Lack of studies in developing countries,
- Little is known about prevalence and the risk factors.
The purpose

- To estimate prevalence and risk factors for Iranian elder mistreatment,

- To determine types of abuse or potential neglect in an urban community-dwelling Iranian population,

- To identify impact of social demographic factors on elder abuse.
Method of Study

- **Type of study:**
  Cross-sectional, population-based survey.

- **Participants:**
  Recruited about 1% (N=300) qualified elderly aged 60+ years.

- **Region:**
  Two urban health centers in Ahvaz (6.8% population 60+ years), as a southeastern province in Iran (with common coverage of 30000 elderly Health Profile) in 2012.

- **To protect:**
  They asked in a place where they could talk privately, and applied “yes or no” response, rather than a description of the mistreatment event on sensitive topics.
**Measures**

- Elder mistreatment defined in four major forms of abuse: Psychological, Financial, Physical mistreatment, Neglect by a family member, in-laws, or relatives.

- **There was no considering to sexual abuse due to cultural barriers.**

- A modified form of Hwalek-Sengstock Elder Abuse Screening Test (H-S/EAST) was administered.

- Reliability of this questionnaire was approved (alpha crombach’s = 0.88) in translated to Persian language.
Method of data collection

- Systematic random sampling applied through the unique health code of official residency registration lists in two health center profiles,

- Only one elderly person from each selected household was interviewed (in case if more than one available),

- A semi-structured interview schedule administered,

- Participants were interviewed in their homes, after initial permit for a home visit by phone.

- SPSS used to analyze risk factors and mistreatment data.
Results: Description Data

Demographic:

- Mean 68.73 years (SD = 6.65), ranging from 60 to 90 years
- More than half (53.3%, n = 160) were female;
- 49.3% (n = 148) lived with their spouse & children;
Results: Description Cont...

- **Response to the risk factor of mistreatment questions indicated:**
  - 10.7% (32) of respondents were employed,
  - 40.6% (122) retired with salary,
  - 43.0% (129) had a low household income,
  - and 5.7% (17) was jobless.

- **Financially aspect:**
  - 81.7% (245) depended only on self-made income,
  - 18.3% (55) depended on financial support for children.
  - 49.7% (149) had no education or illiterate, and 50.3% (151) had primary education levels.
Types of elder mistreatment:

- Overall prevalence in types of elderly mistreatment was 14.7% (44),
- Prevalence of all types of elderly abuse was more in elderly women, especially in psychological abuse.

- Physical abuse = 10.3% (31),
- Psychological abuse = 3.0% (9),
- Potential caregiver neglect = 9.0% (27), and
- Financial mistreatment in the past year = 3.0% (9).
Results: Cont...

- Young-old (60-69) reported no mistreatment compared to the oldest-old (80+) at $P = 0.067$

- Education level was negatively associated with elder mistreatment (educated elderly had less chances of being abused or neglect),

- Elderly who are living with spouse reported less abuse and neglect than those who are alone or staying with relevant or caregiver.
Results: Cont...

Regression models:

Univariate model mistreatment was dependent to

- Sex, Income, and Education.

- However, Living source (depending on children support) was a risk factor for the mistreatment (OR=2.29: 95% CI 1.09% - 4.81%) and a risk factor for caregiver neglect.

- Level of education was a risk factor for physical and Psychological abuse.
Conclusion

- Approximately 14.7% of adults aged 60+ residing in an urban provincial area in Iran were identified as possible victims of abuse, with physical abuse and potential caregiver neglect being the most common subtypes.
**Recommendation**

- Inquiry for *research-based tools* to determine of elderly abuse and provide the source for other study needed.

- Future research to determine just *what forms of abuse*, in the context of *which risk factors*, lead to which negative emotional, functional, and health outcomes.

- Detecting of *different risk factors for each subtype* should prompt future studies to take into accounts the various aspects and diversity of abuse.
Thank You!