

Depression, Anxiety and Early Presbyopia in Saudi Female

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Abstract

The study examines the onset of Presbyopia, Depression and anxiety in Saudi females. Presbyopia is a condition that occurs as one grows older. In Saudi Arabia, women have a higher preference of developing the disease compared to the men. This is due to the fact that women live longer than men as the life expectancy of women is three times higher compared to men. Moreover, the population is exposed to risk such as high temperatures in the country, resulting in too much ultraviolet radiation. The research seeks to establish a link between poor eye health and mental health as the contributory factors related to early presbyopia. The study seeks to understand how eye disease can affect patients, particularly women's mental health during the early onset of the disease.

The method for research involved the collection of clinical data from 28 female participants. Out of the 28, 14 were in the control group, whereas the other 14 exhibited the visual impairment. All the participants selected developed presbyopia between ages 35 and 40. The participants completed a questionnaire that linked mental health and depression. Also, a brief, standardized depression screen was conducted. The findings from the study confirmed that in Saudi Arabia, the onset of Presbyopia is 35 to 39 years compared to Caucasians which is between the ages 41 to 45 years. 60% of the population with the disease are from specific professions that include office workers and teachers. The visual impairment was linked to anxiety and depression as the patient's ability to conduct certain activities was disrupted. The study concludes that, whereas vision loss is not the main cause of depression, it increases anxiety and depression due to the limitations it causes among women.

Keywords: Presbyopia, Depression, Anxiety.

Introduction

This study seeks to examine the link between early Presbyopia to depression and anxiety. The condition is particularly common with the advancement in age and can significantly impede vision. There are numerous researchers citing a correlation between depression and vision impairment. For instance, in a study by Nispen et al. the author posits that the inability to cope independently leads to the onset of depression [1]. Owing to the physical and social problems related to eye disease, the purpose of this study is to establish the link between poor eye health and mental health and determine the contributory factors associated with the early onset of presbyopia [2]. This is important as it will enable health care practitioners as they plan for treatment interventions for patients with the impairment. The study focuses on women as it argues that, considering their mortality is three times higher than men, women have a high risk for developing the condition. Therefore, the study examines the onset of early presbyopia among women, the implications of the disease on the population and its link to depression and anxiety.

particularly females. The condition results in decreased productivity as the individual is unable to conduct day to day tasks efficiently. The onset age for the condition is cited as 40. However, the highest incidence of the condition is 42 and 44 [3]. The symptoms of the condition include eye strain, blurred vision, double vision, reading problems, sensitivity to light and difficulty in changing the focus from one direction to another. Patients with the condition experience reduced amplitude of accommodation to a point where clear vision from a close distance is a challenge [3].

There are certain risk factors for developing Presbyopia. These risk factors include environmental conditions, for example, chronic deficiency of certain minerals. Individuals exposed to high temperature leading to extreme instances of UV radiation can also end up developing the condition [4]. Other risk factors include the presence of systemic diseases such as diabetes mellitus that can cause refractive effects or multiple sclerosis. Rates for the condition are higher among societies with a high proportion of older people. In a study conducted in the Middle East, more than 1 million people had presbyopia by 2013, with the statistics expected to reach 2 million by 2050 [5].

Presbyopia is a common condition among middle-aged adults,

Women live longer than men; therefore they have a high risk of

incurring the burden for the condition. There are several studies citing that women live longer than men. In Saudi Arabia, life expectancy for women is three times higher (at 77) compared to men (at 74). The rate of eye diseases increases with the progress in age. Therefore, women are likely to be affected with Presbyopia. Changes in vision can also be as a result of other medical comorbidities such as damaged retina [6]. The prevalence rate for the condition is 18.2% among women. As a consequence, the women experience a severe visual disability that leads to depression and anxiety. The loss of visual freedom leads to stages of grief such as denial, annoyance, anxiety and can lead to depression [7]. Also, the loss of visual functions affects an individual's ability to carry on their daily tasks thereby requiring the assistance of other people or visual aids. The inability to cope independently results in depression [1]. A recent study revealed that 11% of women with refractive error were likely to be depressed compared to individuals with no visual problem [1].

Materials & Method

Clinical data was collected from 28 female participants, after obtaining an informed consent. 14 of the participants were in the control group, whereas the other 14 were participants with the condition. Participants with any systematic ocular pathology's or anisometropia were not included. The participants selected had good general and ocular health [8]. Materials used to collect data include the PHQ-9 and GAD-7 scales for assessing depression and anxiety. The participants were examined to ensure that they had a good binocular vision with the corrected acuities of 20/20 thereby requiring an added nearness of equal measure in both eyes. This was achieved through a direct, subjective method. The participants completed a questionnaire that linked mental health with depression. Also, A brief, standardized depression screen was utilized [8].

Results

The study confirms that in Saudi Arabia, the age onset of Presbyopia is between the ages of 35 to 39 years. This is contrary to the Caucasian population in which the age onset of the condition is 41 to 45 years. In the study, 50% of the participants exhibited severe presbyopia, whereas 40% exhibited moderate forms of the impairment and 10% had a mild form of the condition. The severity of the depression was also examined, with 14.20% of the patients exhibiting moderate depression and 35.70% with severe forms of depression. The study confirmed that there is a link between vision loss and depression. However, vision loss is not the main determinant of depression. Depressive symptoms were mediated by specific limitations such as chronic diseases that have been identified as intensifying the visual loss [1]. Previous studies such as indicate that the difficulty in carrying out daily tasks as a result of vision loss can result in physical harm, anxiety and can contribute to the onset of depression.

Conclusion

Considering that Presbyopia is irreversible, there is a need for early treatment, early detection, and early prevention. This will ensure that the disease does not remain uncorrected thereby leading to

depression and anxiety. The link between vision deterioration, anxiety and depression can be related to several factors among women. In the Saudi culture, women are expected to carry out household tasks. Difficulty in completing these tasks due to the condition can result in anxiety and other health problems. Moreover, difficulty in carry-out activities such as dressing or walking can lead to physical injuries resulting from falls or fractures. The climatic conditions in Saudi Arabia, as well as the increasing number of women in the labour force inevitably, led to the increased risk for women to develop the condition.

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