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Dementia in eastern Mediterranean countries: A systematic review

Sara Mahmoud Yaghmour¹, Ruth Bartlett² and Tula Brannelly²

¹King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia

²University of Southampton, United Kingdom

Background: The increase in the older adults' population is a global phenomenon, including in Eastern Mediterranean (EM) countries, where dementia is conventionally hidden.

Aim: To explore dementia and cognitive impairment among geriatric population in EM countries and to identify the gap in the literatures.

Method: A systematic search was conducted in scientific databases including DelphiS, CINAHL, MEDLINE, and ProQuest along with google scholar looked for peer-reviewed articles between 2007-2017. Search keywords included older adult, old*, elder*, geriatric, and senior, in combination with dementia, Alzheimer's*, cognitive impairment, cognitive decline, memory loss. Further combined with Saudi, Arabia*, Middle East*, or Eastern Mediterranean.

Result: After obtaining critical appraisal tools, a total of 31 studies were included with four themes identified. (1) culture: The older adult within EM is highly respected and introducing them to a healthcare facility consider an abandonment of family duty. The term dementia is stigmatised and believed that it caused by fate. (2) Prevalence, comorbidity, and gender: EM population has become more cognisant of Dementia prevalence, and many studies indicated that it is high. Many EM older adults are having at least one chronic illness and low life-satisfaction. (3) Recognition and tools: Language barriers and lack of verified assessment instruments are considered issues in recognising and treating dementia. Despite high illiteracy among older adults within EM community, many are using Mini-Mental State Examination for dementia screening. Healthcare workers are facing a challenge in evaluating psychometric properties. (4) Healthcare workers: lack of knowledge about geriatric and dementia, while geriatric nursing/medicine been introduced recently in some Saudi's universities.

Conclusion/recommendations: Inconsistency published studies on dementia in the region. High demand for creating an educational programme and providing policies to promote practical gerontological nursing/medicine. Healthcare professionals need to become aware of health intentions shared by people from different sociocultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds to deliver culturally sensitive care.

Biography

Sara Mahmoud Yaghmour is a psychogeriatric nursing lecturer at King Abdulaziz University and now a PhD student at the University of Southampton. Currently, she is working on a project to investigate nurses' perception and learning needs when caring for people with dementia using a diary-interview method. Her research interests include nursing education, psychogeriatric nursing care, and people with dementia care. "She aims to be capable of developing and communicating new knowledge in psychogeriatric nursing through designing and carrying out high-quality research and training".

smyaghmour1@kau.edu.sa

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