Prevalence of Cognitive Decline in Major Depressive Illness

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Abstract : Introduction: Depressive illness predispose individuals to a lot of physical and mental health issues. Anxiety and substance use disorders have been studied widely as comorbidity. Biological symptoms also now considered part of the depressive spectrum. Cognitive abilities also decline or get affected and need to be looked into in detail in depressed patients. Objective: To determine the prevalence of cognitive decline among patients with major depressive illness and analyze the associated socio-demographic factors. Methods: 190 patients of major depressive illness were included in our study to determine the presence of cognitive decline among them. Depression was diagnosed by a consultant psychiatrist by using the ICD-10 criteria for major depressive disorder. British Columbia Cognitive Complaints Inventory (BC-CCI) was the psychometric tool used to determine the cognitive decline. Sociodemographic profile was recorded and the relationship of various factors with cognitive decline was also ascertained. Findings: 70% of the patients suffering from depression included in this study showed the presence of some degree of cognitive decline, while 30% did not show any evidence of cognitive decline when screened through BCCCI. Statistical testing revealed that the female gender was the only socio-demographic parameter linked significantly with the presence of cognitive decline. Conclusion: Decline in cognitive abilities was found in a significant number of patients suffering from major depression in our sample population. Screening for this parameter f mental function should be done in depression clinics to pick it early.

Keywords : depression, cognitive decline, prevalence, socio-demographic factors
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