

Gender Inequalities in Depression among Palestinian Citizens in Israel

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Abstract : Depression is a major public health concern and it is estimated to be the second leading cause of morbidity in 2020. One of the most consistent findings in mental health in the Western societies is inequalities in depression between men and women. Studies on differences in depression between Arab men and women are scarce. In this paper, we use data of a countrywide study on the Arab minority in Israel to compare the prevalence of depressive symptoms between men and women and examine factors that contribute to this gender inequality in the context of Arab society. The study was conducted in 2005-2006. It included a sample of Palestinian citizens of Israel, aged 30-70. The final sample included 902 respondents (381 women and 521 men) who were interviewed face-to-face using a structured questionnaire in Arabic, before which they each signed an informed consent form. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Hadassah - Hebrew University Medical Center. Results show that women had significantly higher depressive symptoms (DS) than men. In addition, while Arab women had steady rates of depressive symptoms between the ages of 40-54 and a peak at the age group of 55-59, among Arab men there was a peak almost every 10 years (more results will show in the full presentation). We assume that our findings might be attributed to the specific structural changes in the Arab society in Israel in the last decades.

Keywords : Arab men, Arab women, depression, gender inequality

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