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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ELDERLY PATIENTS WITH DEPRESSION

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Objective: To detect phenomenological gender differences in elderly patients with depression for better understanding. In addition to illustrate neuro- psychological gender differences in elderly patients with depression for better management.

Subjects: A case/control, comparative study with consecutive sample. 80 elderly Egyptian subjects of both sexes aged 60 years or above recruited from psychiatry outpatient clinic in Kasr Al Aini and Beni Suef hospitals with no obvious cognitive impairment or substance related psychiatric disorders. The subjects were classified into 2 groups (depressed patients and control groups) 40 subjects each. The

Methods: Diagnostic criteria of the DSM-IV TR, Symptom checklist, MMSE, GDS, WAIS and STAI were used.

Results: Comparison between the depressed patients and the control group revealed that the depressed group has affected cognitively than the control group as assessed by MMSE and also showed deterioration of intellectual abilities (deterioration index). Comparison between the depressed males and females subgroups revealed that the characteristics of the patients and correlates of depression are similar in both sexes except for some significant findings e.g, depression in elderly women is more associated with widowhood, more suffering of sense of worthlessness, more affection of attention and more disturbance in reasoning and constructional abilities.

Conclusion: Depression in older patients is related to widowhood, presence of family conflicts and positive past history of depression. There were no gender differences in elderly depressed patients except for that depression in elderly women is more associated with widowhood, sense of worthlessness, more affection of attention and more disturbance in reasoning.