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Effects of corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on older people: A comparative study to the disparities of care aspects in nursing homes in Jordan

KHATAYBEH, Yousef Damen

ABSTRACT

This study was both qualitative and quantitative. It aimed at revealing the disparities in the aspects of welfare that are presented to the older people before and after corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The study was conducted on a sample of 68 older people through an interview survey instrument as well as the unilateral contrast test to show the statistical differences. Six nursing home managers were interviewed through arranged interviews. The findings of the study indicate that before COVID-19, the social, health, and psychological aspects were well-provided to the older people in a good way despite some of the shortcomings in health domain. After the outbreak of the corona virus, the aspects of social welfare have been nearly halted. This has the psychological state of the older people. After five months, acclimatization with the pandemic has gradually reappeared. Health care has been improved in a better way to be totally different from that before the outbreak of the pandemic. The study concluded that there were statistically significant differences about the aspects of care due to age. These differences were in favor of the oldest, 81 years and above, who are more socially and psychologically adapted than others. The disparity in the aspects of care appeared after the outbreak of the corona epidemic.

KEY TERMS: aging, COVID-19, effects, Jordan, nursing homes, older people

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Author/s details

Dr. Yousef Damen Khataybeh, Associate professor of sociology, Al-Balqa Applied University, +962772077892, Jordan-Amman, Email: y.katibh@bau.edu.jo

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INTRODUCTION

The effects of the global pandemic corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) have undoubtedly touched all aspects and domains of human life such as the social, economic, and health ones. Its effects appear conspicuously to have fatal, hurtful, and harmful consequences on some levels and groups who have been called as high-risk holders according to the description of World Health Organization (WHO) (2020). The effects also touch the life of the older people and those who suffer from very dangerous and dreadful diseases that extremely abound among them, particularly those who can be found in nursing homes. In this article, authors report disparities in the aspects of welfare services that are provided to the older people before and after corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

BACKGROUND

Aging is considered as an inevitable phenomenon. Many people will reach and feel a kind of alienation from the social structure and begin to withdraw from the public society. This comes close to what Nevis (2019) has indicated by arguing that the worst feeling in the world is that of loneliness and social alienation that occur among the older people who live in nursing homes. These days, the society of aging encounters challenge that falls on the responsibility and burden of hospitals, families, societies, and those who present care services (Ziefle and et al., 2020). Developing the procedures and plans in care institutions should be ineluctable to help those who have become unable and less powerful due to aging, disease, or economic crisis (Juhami, 2019). Adjusting to all methods, systems, and procedures undoubtedly aims to enhance and maintain development in society for the sake of bringing solutions to the older people problems as well as contributing to fostering and maintaining the efforts of the state in achieving all forms of human, social, and economic needs.

In Jordan, the concept of the aging is applied on those who reached 60 years and more. Accordingly, the population in Jordan till the end of 2019 had reached 7.321 million people including (665.3) thousands of older people persons who formed 9.2%. According to the Ministry of Health, the licensed nursing homes were 10 in which three are private and the other seven are voluntary sectors. The number of day clubs reached four (Jordanian Ministry of Social Development 2020).

It should be noted that every human society has its own social and cultural heritage. As such, there are concrete and tangible disparities between humanist societies about the approach of dealing with the old people. The institutional nursing homes remained limited in spreading in our Arabic societies, particularly in Jordan. This can be attributed to several dimensions that are related to norms, custom, and religious and cultural values that enhance much reverence to the older people. There are communities that share such religious and cultural components. The older people remain in higher states that are full of values and reverences (Sonia, 2020). The majority of the older people live in a familial environment that is difficult do not receive a lot of social and psychological support and care in comparison to those nursing homes where care functions as the basis of such homes.

The problem

The problem of the study focuses on revealing the effects of COVID-19 on the older people as well as exploring the psychological, health, and social disparities that are presented to them in contrast to care and several aspects of care that were presented to before the spread of corona and how their status has been changed. The study also tries to explore the differences among the older people about care that is offered and presented. Such disparities can be attributed to some variables such as gender, place of residence, family monthly income, family size, levels of education, and the state of procreation. In the last years, it has become apparent that the older people suffer from unbearable problems inside these nursing homes. We don't accurately know if their suffering lasts in the light of corona.

Significance

This study gains its importance from the fact that it is new and rare in Jordan to expose the care aspects that are presented to the older people especially after the spread of corona that affects all aspects of social life. The results of the study add a new knowledge that is significant to administrators, nursing homes, specialists who work and deal with the older people. It also maintains new procedures and plans that benefit the older people in the light of corona effects and after it.

Aim and questions

The study aimed at exploring the psychological, health, and social care aspects that are presented to the older people persons in nursing homes in Jordan before the outbreak of corona. As such, the study answers the following questions:

1. What are the aspects of care that presented to the older people in Jordan?
2. Are there any significant statistical differences in the aspects of care that can be attributed to some variables such as gender, age, and previous place of residence, social status, levels of education, and the procreation state?
3. What are the effects of corona pandemic on the aspects of care that are presented to the older people in nursing homes?

CURRENT LITERATURE

There is a little study of the effects of corona on the level of the older people. The reason can be ascribed to the fact that the outbreak of corona formed unprecedented phenomenon that its consequences are still dominating all people's life. Ziefle, et al (2020) study was about the way the participants' dealing with evaluating and giving care to aging in Turkey and Germany. The findings explored disparities in the participants' stance of both countries as well as their perceptions about the benefits and the repercussions that are related to the acceptance of cameras as assistant instruments that must be used by the specialists of care aging. Depending on technology in some duties to facilitate services can be undoubtedly helpful in the time of corona. A quantitative study conducted by Giebel et al (2020) showed that there is a decrease in social services' support since the outbreak of corona.

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has been a test for many institutions, governments, and even nursing homes as stated in (Kabir et al, 2020) in rescuing the older people. By maintaining several quick procedures, constantly cleaning, and wearing equipment of personal protection, isolating groups, and separating the sections of inmates as well as maintain social distance in addition to transferring those who are inflicted to palliative care.

Previous care studies before the outbreak of corona pandemic. The most useful is: (Nevis, et al, 2019). It states that technology functions as an effective communication instrument in enhancing social connection among the older people, reducing the social isolation and feeling of loneliness inside themselves despite the observation that confirms its negative effects. Slaiha's study (2019) shows that the older people suffer from the weak relations with their families as well as they are inflicted with permanent diseases. Her study affirms that the older people suffer from the weakness of relations with their families. The results of Al-Souad' study (2018) show is a good degree of the older people social acclimatization on the whole measure and scales. The differences have been attributed to the variables of gender and in favor for males. In addition to the length of residence for the benefits of the older people who have a longer life in care institutions. The result of (Emhamedi and Gharib 2018) shows there are eight problems among the older people and there is a relationship between social support and aging problems. As such, some problems differ according to the variables of gender.

In her study (Azarbeh, 2016) shows that the residential care institutions function significantly. In his study (Somkit, 2014) that has been conducted on the older people in Thailand shows that they were satisfied about the policy of social care at a moderate level such as social security, knowledge, and education. Conversely, the results of Al-Zyioud's study (2012) in Jordan indicated that there is a compatibility of the residential older people views in the governmental and private nursing homes in a way of saying that they don't receive the social care aspects that are undoubtedly necessary for them.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The study was a descriptive and explorative one that is based on the social survey method. A vast number of field data has been collected and analyzed before the outbreak of corona in Jordan. With the emergence of the pandemic that lasts for 9 months, the study has been developed. The quantitative approach has been adopted as well as relying on the semi-disciplined interviews to detect the effects and repercussions of the pandemic on the older people. The researcher has resumed developing the qualitative method to the quantitative as well as to depending on the semi-structured interview instrument with nursing homes' managers between 9-11/2020 in order to explore the effects of the pandemic on the care aspects in the mentioned domains.

The community of the study and the sample

The community of the study consisted of all residential older people in social nursing homes in Jordan. Their number were (383) according to the statistics of the ministry of social development (2020) distributed on (10) sheltering centers in different municipalities in Jordan. The sample has been selected according to the intentional-class method from these nursing homes: Al-Zahra and Al-Bir, Al-Osrah Al-Bida, Irbid Association for Hosting the Older people. The size of the family was confirmed to be (68) participants, (25) males, and (43) females. In the second phase the data was from (6) participants of sheltering institutions managers by visiting each one separately due to the inability of accessing the older people places or recording their observations

because of defense laws, governmental instructions and the administration of preventing all visits to older people even if they are for searching purposes.

Study instrument

The interview instrument was adopted as a main key instrument for collecting data from the older people. The researcher designed the instrument in accordance with the aims and the study questions as well as depending on section of demographic and personal data of the older people. The study' instruments were verified through refereeing the survey by five specialized professors in sociology and social service. The process of the instrument's validity was represented after calculating the internal consistency according to Cronbach equation. The total value of the instrument was 0.95 which is considered as the highest rates that are acceptable for the purposes of the study. In addition to the disciplined interview instrument that has been mentioned earlier with a sample of institutions managers.

Statistical analysis

A number of statistical analytical methods have been used such as the descriptive statistics to describe the characteristics of the sample and the community of the study. The study also used the analysis of arithmetic averages and standard deviations to show the most important paragraphs. In addition, the contrastive analysis (Independent T-test, One Way ANOVA) has been used to detect the relational relationships between the independent and the following variables.

Characteristics of the study sample

Distributing the older people in nursing homes according to gender. The majority were females (63%) contrast (37 %) were older people males. Sixty-one (61%) were between 60-69 years. (29 %) were between 70-70 years, and the remaining others (10 %) with the age of 80 and above. Regarding the variable of the social status, the ratio was (47 %), the divorced (27 %), the widowed (16 %), the singles (10 %). Regarding the original residence, the majority were from the city with a ratio of (44 %), followed by (29 %) of camps' population, and a minority from rural origins. Regarding the education levels of the older people, the majority was having the basic learning with a ratio (47 %), followed by (27 %) illiterate and others are second secondary holders. Most of the older people in nursing homes (81 %) have kids, whereas (19 %) do not have.

RESULTS

Aspects of social welfare

Table 1: Older people's responses about social welfare before outbreak of COVID-19 in a descending order

Paragraph number	Rank	Paragraphs	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Level
9	1	There are good relations with or older people in nursing homes	3.00	2.89	High
8	2	There are enjoyable trips that are organized by nursing homes	2.66	2.33	High
1	3	Difficulty in acclimatizing with some of nursing home's systems	2.10	1.60	High
2	4	Social specialist helps me to contact with my family	1.90	1.70	High
5	5	None of my family members visit me	1.80	1.55	High
6	6	I can easily interact with any new group that I meet in nursing home	1.78	1.34	High
3	7	Manager does not hesitate to help me on request	1.64	1.10	Medium
7	8	My family members call to be reassured	1.00	1.7	Medium
4	9	Social guidance is always available	1.00	1.6	Medium
Social welfare as a whole			2.00	.151	High

Table1 illustrates that paragraph (9) gained the highest arithmetic average in which there is good relations in nursing homes. In the second level, paragraph (8) which says: there are enjoyable trips regulated by the nursing home, gains the arithmetic average that equals to (2.66). In the third place, there is a difficulty in acclimatizing some of the nursing home's systems. In the final place, all the paragraphs indicate that there is no social guidance in a constant way in addition to the families' rare calls and communications with the older people.

Aspects of health care

Table 2: Older people responses about the aspects of health care before the outbreak of COVID-19 in a descending order

Paragraph number	Rank	Paragraphs	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Level
1	1	Availability of health care for all older people in the institution	2.74	.433	High
4	2	The quality of the food that is presented is not good	2.48	.900	High
5	3	Nurses and doctors treat the older people in a cruel way	2.26	.853	High
3	4	There are enough doctors and nurses in the institution	2.04	1.09	High
3	4	The institution provides a proper system of nutrition	1.96	1.10	High
7	5	The institution provides medication to the patient without delay	1.96	1.02	High
2	6	Maintaining permanent cleanliness in older people homes	1.52	1.00	High
The overall aspects of care			2.20	1.00	High

Table 2 illustrates the higher arithmetic average for paragraph (1) that says: health care is available to all the older people in the nursing home. In the second rank, paragraph (4) states the declining the quality of food that is presented to the older people in the nursing home. Followed by the paragraph that says: "the cruel treatment of the older people by doctors and nurses", followed by "doctors and nurses are available inside the nursing home". In the final rank, paragraph (6) which says: maintaining hygiene in the nursing homes permanently."

Psychological welfare

Table 3: Older people's responses about the psychological welfare before the outbreak of corona in a descending order according to its importance

Paragraph number	Rank	Paragraphs	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Level
4	1	I feel that the staff at the institutions understand my problems	3.00	2.03	High
5	2	The treatment of the social specialist is full of respect and love	2.87	1.89	High
6	3	The institution presents enjoyable activities that can the older people participate	2.58	1.45	High
3	4	The institution presents security and freedom to the older people	2.27	1.08	High
7	5	There are reading rooms and libraries	2.01	.957	High
1	6	I feel comfortable with others inside the institution	1.92	.923	Medium
2	7	There are sport halls to practice sport	1.71	.844	Medium
8	8	I enjoy participating in the organization's events	1.36	.787	Medium
The overall psychological aspects of care			2.61	1.91	High

Table 3 gained the highest arithmetic average, paragraph (4) says: "I feel that the staffs who work at the nursing home understand my problems", followed by paragraph (5) which says: "the social specialist's treatment with the older people is loaded with love and emotions". In the third rank, the nursing home provides interesting activities that the older people involve and participate". Followed by a paragraph that is centered on the idea of the older people feeling of security and freedom. In the final rank, the paragraphs are centered on the idea of the older people low participation in parties. This can be attributed to the weakness of providing sport activities.

Aspects of care in the light of some social variables

To answer this question and to show the statistic difference indication, "T" test has been used for both gender, the procreation status, analyzing the unilateral disparity, social status, level of education, and age.

First: Gender

Table 4: T-test is used to investigate the differences in welfare aspects that are presented to the older people in the light of gender

Aspects of care	Gender	Number	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	"T" value	Freedom degrees	Statistical significance
Social care aspects	Male	25	2.00	0.66	2.322	48	0.033
	Female	43	3.00	0.87			
Health care aspects	Male	25	2.00	0.85	2.117	48	0.039
	Female	43	3.10	1.15			
Psychological care aspects	Male	25	1.89	0.56	1.396	48	0.169
	Female	43	1.00	0.48			
Total	Male	25	3.00	0.80	3.343	48	.276
	Female	45	2.00	0.60			

It can be illustrated from table (4) that there are indications in statistical differences in social welfare aspects that can be attributed to the variable of gender and for the sake of female since they are more willing to acclimatize than men. The value of the level has reached (0.033). Moreover, differences in health welfare aspects were founded for the benefits of female with indication level (0.039). Whereas on the total level, no statistic differences that can be attributed to gender were proved.

Second: The original place of residence

The result of the unilateral contrast test was that there are no statistically significant differences about the aspects of care that are presented to the older people in nursing homes that can be attributed to the original place of residence. The total level indication reached (0.457), it is not statistically indicating at the significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$).

Third: Age

It can be illustrated from the unilateral contrast test that there are statistical significant differences in the aspects of psychological care that can be attributed to age. The whole total statistical significance level of the fields indicates that there are differences that are statistically significant in the aspects of care as a whole that can be attributed to the variable of age. The level of the statistical significance was (0.054) which it is statistically indicating at the significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$).

Fourth: The social status

The result of the unilateral contrast test was that there were no statistical significant differences in all aspects of care that are presented to the older people in nursing homes that can be attributed to the variable of social status of the older people. The value of total indication level reached (0.687) and it is not statistically indicating at the significance level. ($0.05 \geq \alpha$).

Fifth: *The education level*

The result of the unilateral contrast test was that there are no statistical significant differences in the aspects of care that are presented to the older people in nursing homes. The overall statistical significance level was (0.476) which is not statistically indicating at the significance level.

Sixth: *Procreation status*

The results of the unilateral contrast test shows that there are no statistically significant differences in the aspects of health as well as psychological care that can be attributed to the variable of procreation status, whereas, there are differences in the aspects of social status that can be attributed to the social status and for the benefits of the older people who have kids. The value of statistical significance was (0.030). Meanwhile, the overall value of statistical significance (0.500) shows no differences, and it is not statistically indication at the significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS**Aspects of care that presented to the older people in Jordan**

The results that are related to the social aspects of care before the outbreak of corona were presented in good levels. The best things that were available are the developing friendships between them, enjoying the external trips, the good treatment and constant concern of the social specialists with the older people. This goes along with (Azarbah, 2016) and differs with (Al-Zyioud, 2012). It agrees with the essential basic of activity theory. On the other hand, there are shortcomings that have centered on their acclimatization with the institutions' systems as well as external reasons that are related to the breakdown of their relations with their families, the lack of communication with them, and the weakness of internal guidance. Some of these results go along with (Sliha, 2019).

The results of the study show that the older people in nursing homes have revealed their satisfaction toward the aspects of health care which the most prominent of it was presenting the integrated health care for all the older people. Despite the availability of doctors and nurses, the older people satisfaction appears to be less about their treatment which is described as full of cruelty. Moreover, the older people were unsatisfied about the food that is presented to them as well as about the system of the nutrition that is prevalent in these institutions. In addition, they were also unsatisfied about the cleanliness that appears to be unsuitable in the older people rooms. These results go along with what (Al-Zyioud, 2012) has discovered. Moreover, it also goes along with the conclusion of (Somkit and et al, 2014). The older people were satisfied in a moderate level. As such, we have examined the aspects of care that are available in contrast to the aspects of shortcoming.

The aspects of psychological care: the results have concluded that the older people have affirmed their satisfaction reading this aspect. The most prominent of which was the staff in nursing homes were able to understand the problems of the older people who are treated in a way that is full of devotion, respect, and love by the specialists. The nursing home presents a theatrical activity that allows the older people to participate according to their desires and tendencies. The older people are satisfied with the aspects of care and psychological support as they feel comfortable and touch the good psychological acclimatization. These results align with the foundations of continuity theory which has been developed by "Havens and Tashili". The most prominent shortcoming aspect is the less participation of the older people in celebrations and parties. On the other hand, the sources of sport activities are not sufficient for them in these institutions.

Differences in the older people aspects of care that can be attributed to the social variables

The results have reached that there statistical significant difference about the aspects of care that can be attributed to age and for the benefits of those who are 80 years and more and who are more willing to socially and psychologically acclimatize. These results go along with (Sini, 2015). Moreover, women are also more socially and health-acclimatized than males. Such result completely differs from that of (Al-Soud, 2018) which has exposed those males are more willing to acclimatize. The remaining results indicate that there are no statistical differences on the overall all degrees that can be attributed to the original place of residence, education, social status as well as the procreation status.

Effects of COVID-19 on the aspects of care that are presented of the older people in nursing homes

Throughout the arranged interviews with the administrations of nursing homes and after 10 months of the outbreak of corona , the study has reached that there are clear and disparate bad effects of corona on the aspects of social care: what was proved through the previous results before the outbreak of Corona is a disparate difference in the

aspects of care or to say the disappearance of these bad effects such as the lack of parties, celebrations, and the different activities inside the nursing homes. Moreover, the internal and the external trips to restaurants and touristic places have been disappeared. In addition, the lack of family and relatives visit to the older people as well as those who work in charity. Such activities were vital to the older people before corona. Its results were useful and beneficial to the older people. They were jubilant to spend their extra time in a comfortable situation and places which in turn reflect in a good way on their health. Their practicing to some activities and tasks were undeniably considered as the source of their happiness and pleasure. Overall, the bad and negative effects are attributed to circumstances of the lockdown and the effect of the pandemic that began at the beginning of (2020) and still continuing to these days.

Regarding the health care

The health care aspects have reduced and affirmed that there are shortcomings whereas in interviews with the administrations of nursing homes that the level of health care to the older people has become better in contrast to the time before COVID-19. The better way of such level is achieved through fostering supervision, medical disclosure and making routinely diagnosis as well as following up the health state of the older people and showing the good treatment from the medical staff. Moreover, the appropriate health system that has shortcomings has been restored. The continual cleanliness and the permanent sterilization have also been enhanced to achieve good conditions as well as using all medical and health requirements. These procedures appear to be identical with those that have been followed in some of the nursing homes in Sweden (Kabirand et al, 2020). As such, all of the services have been presented in a better and proper way. Such disparity can be attributed to the staff feeling of the dangerous effect of COVID-19 that has fatal consequences as declared by the WHO (2020).

Psychological care aspects

The results of the interview have affirmed that the psychological level of the older people has been reduced. The results have affirmed that the psychological level of the older people has been reduced in contrast to the time of corona. The level of anxiety and tension has been increased. The negative feelings and the bad moods have also pervasive in the life of the older people. This has been reflected on their life during the first months of corona in contrast to the stability of their psychological mood before corona. This can be attributed to two reasons, the first: the shocking news and effects of corona on the older people. The second reason is the disparity of the effects of corona as it causes disappearance of visits and trips as well as cessation of activities, parties, and the lack of denotation, gifts, and clothes. It is noteworthy to mention that the older people have become willing to adapt and acclimatize with all conditions of COVID-19 in the last few months. These results go along with Paz García-Portilla and et al, 2020) in Spanish society.

CONCLUSION

Care of older people in nursing homes has been negatively affected by COVID-19. Undoubtedly, health care was offered in a good way, but it has been diminished with the spread of the pandemic despite the development of health care aspects such as medical examination, supervision, the instant follow-up, cleaning, and sterilization to the nursing homes of the older people. COVID-19 has affected services being provided, especially welfare services. Resultantly, this has resulted in more psychosocial challenges for older people in Jordan. While this research was done in Jordan, it also has implications for other countries: services for older people need to be balanced even in the time of COVID-19. The health, social and psychological needs all need to be addressed adequately.

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