

## Research Article

# Comparison of the Quality of Life and Depression in the Elderly with and without a History of COVID-19 Infection in Shiraz, Iran

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**Background.** COVID-19 causes many physical and mental complications. The elderly, as one of the vulnerable groups, were more exposed to the problems caused by this pandemic. The aim of this study was to compare the quality of life and depression in the elderly with and without a history of COVID-19 infection. **Method.** This is a cross-sectional descriptive study conducted on 404 elderly people (202 from the affected group and 202 from the nonaffected group) aged over 60 years old in Shiraz city. The elderly participants were selected based on simple random sampling from the elderly list. In order to collect information, the quality of life questionnaire of the World Health Organization and Beck's depression questionnaire were used. Data analysis was done through SPSS software version 22 using statistical tests of chi-square, *t*-test, analysis of variance, and Pearson's correlation coefficient. An alpha level under 0.05 was considered the significant level. **Results.** The average score of depression in the elderly with a history of COVID-19 ( $14.66 \pm 13.17$ ) was significantly higher than that of the elderly without a history of COVID-19 ( $9.71 \pm 10.12$ ) ( $p < 0.001$ ). The average score of the quality of life in the elderly with a history of COVID-19 ( $80.15 \pm 14.85$ ) was significantly lower than that of the elderly without a history of COVID-19 ( $85.25 \pm 14.09$ ) ( $p < 0.001$ ). **Conclusion.** Elderly people with a history of COVID-19 had more depression and lower quality of life compared to people without a history of COVID-19. It is suggested that planners and health policymakers should pay special attention to the use of effective psychological interventions in order to reduce the problems of the elderly.

## 1. Introduction

After starting in China for the first time, the COVID-19 disease spread rapidly around the world and caused a pandemic [1]. Most people with this disease recover without any special treatment. However, the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions become more severely ill and are more susceptible to complications from the disease [2]. Old age is an important risk factor for severe infection with COVID-19, which causes other problems for the elderly, in addition to causing severe disease [3, 4].

This pandemic has had a lot of effects on all age groups in physical and mental dimensions [5–7], and the elderly have suffered the most [8]. Elderly people experience the most challenges and threats caused by this disease due to their susceptibility to more severe diseases and more deaths, as well as the consequences of social quarantine [9]. The fear and worry of catching the COVID-19 disease have a negative effect on the physical and mental health of the elderly [10]. One of the most common psychological problems in the elderly is depression, which can occur in any period of life, especially in critical situations [11]. A systematic review con-

## Ethical Approval

This research has been approved and registered by the Research Ethics Committee of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences with code IR.SUMS.NUMIMG.REC.1401.026.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interests in this work.

## Authors' Contributions

AB conceived and designed the study, analyzed the data, authored or reviewed the drafts of the manuscript, and approved the final draft. CT conceived and designed the study, authored or reviewed the drafts of the manuscript, and approved the final draft. MNK conceived and designed the study, analyzed the data, authored or reviewed the drafts of the manuscript, and approved the final draft. All authors have contributed to, read, and approved this submitted manuscript in its current form.

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