

# The Effectiveness of the Intervention Programming the Framework of Professional General Practice to Educate Social Workers Working in the Elderly Patients Field Treated for Alzheimer 's and Their Families

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## Abstract

There are changes associated with aging, including deficiencies in mental capacity and lack of emotional balance and diseases of aging like Alzheimer which is lack of mental capacity and functional brain disorder. Patient social care has a direct impact on the worsening condition of the patient; where studies indicated that patient care delays the worsening of their health status. Social work is generally regarded as one of the professions that cares for and looks after elderly and their families in cases of wellness and illness. Social worker plays an important role in helping patient family to deal with problems arising from the disease as well as guiding the family to join psychological and social support groups in order to help them to overcome their problems. The general practice in social work could have effective results when social workers deal with Alzheimer's patient's families. Social work is considered one of the recent trends. It is an applied trend dealing with all patterns and by applying this trend on social workers working in elderly field could achieve two objectives. The first objective is training social workers to use this trend with all clients generally and the objective is training them to apply it on the patient families particularly. Hence, problem of the study is identified as: effectiveness testing of general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers working in the field of elderly patient treated for Alzheimer's and patient social care method.

**Keywords:** Professional intervention - Alzheimer – effectiveness – awareness - general practice.

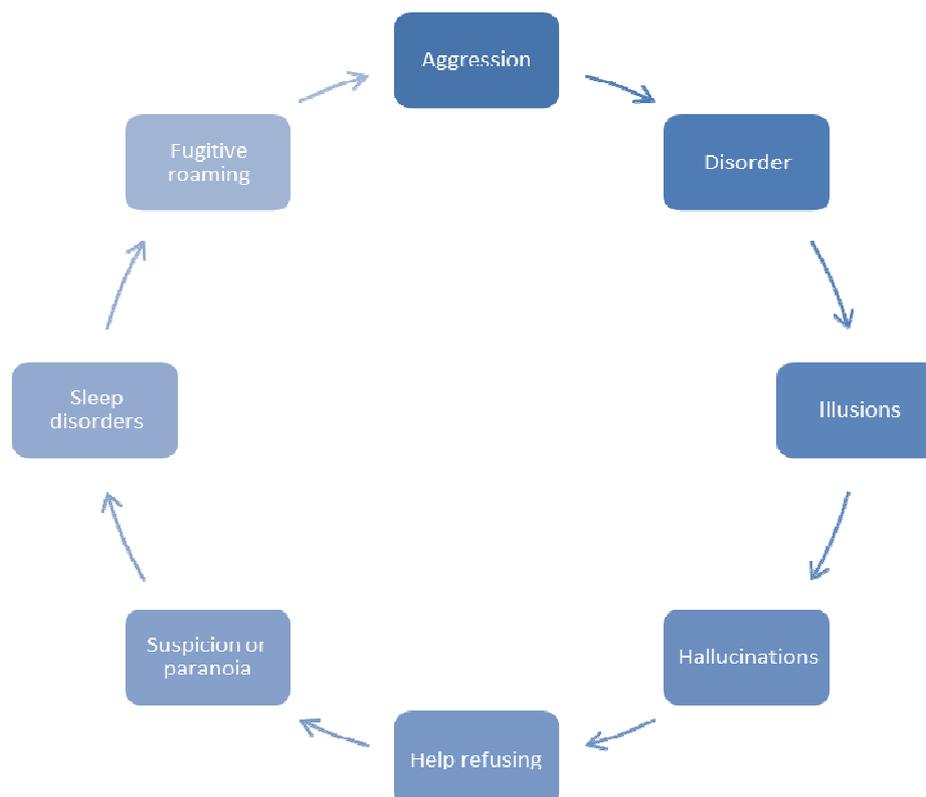
## Introduction

Ageing is the most well-known risk factors of being affected with Alzheimer's. Brain aging affects 4 million people in the United States and approximately 25 million people around the world. In spite of this widespread, Alzheimer's remains not completely detected.

The detection of the disease at the appropriate time is very important as the medication is available. Medicines and medical interventions can delay the analysis. The damage caused by Alzheimer does not stop at patients but extends for their families and friends.

Observing of your loved one during his health deteriorating is a very harsh and terrified experience leading to sadness and depression among family members. (Algary, 2006 : 215).

When Alzheimer's worsens, the most well-known changes are mood and behavior altering. Actually, the difficult behavior patterns associating with Alzheimer's mostly includes:



Behavioral problems do not occur due to lack of awareness but because of other reasons such as health, psychological, environmental and social factors. (Petersen, 2003: 79).

It is worthwhile to distinguish between incurable and treatable disease looking at available options of Alzheimer's medication. Alzheimer is actually still incurable but it is treatable disease by using medicines and personal care even in the case of worsening of its symptoms gradually. In fact, the medicines aiming at improving the perception behavior and mitigation of bad behavior greatly improve the quality of life for people with Alzheimer's and their care providers. Therefore, the strongest weapon facing this disease is personal concentration. (Petersen, 2003:86).

There are formal domestic statistics illustrating spread of the disease in Saudi Arabia while the reports, published by Central Department of Statistics & Information of the Ministry of Planning, state that there is an increasing in the number of elderly in the kingdom. Their number in 2000 was 800 thousand people but in 2007, they became more than 900 thousand people. These reports also declare that elderly percentage increased in 2000 from 4.4 % of the population to 5.2 %. According to global statistics, it is expected that the number of elderly with Alzheimer's in Saudi Arabia is about 45 thousand people currently.

Saudi Alzheimer's Disease Association, [www.aleqt.com](http://www.aleqt.com)

There are stressful situations not only faced by the elderly patient with Alzheimer's faces but also by all family members. It is noted that families differ greatly in their ability to adapt to these stressful situations. Their difference may be due to the interaction between the family resources on the one hand, and the acuteness of situations on the other hand.

There is a correlation between disease and family, so both affect the other positively and negatively. The changes that could occur for any member of the family may compel the other family members to adapt to these changes in order to keep the balance. When one of the family members has Alzheimer's, the family suffers from tension and it does its best through its members to adapt to the patient with all of its means and possibilities. (Al-Obeidi Ibrahim, 137: 133, 2003).

### Importance of the study

1. The lack of Arab studies and research in social work that deal with the role of professional intervention in Alzheimer's patient care.
2. Scarceness of experimental studies in social work in Saudi Arabia because of the recentness of this specialty.
3. Need of Social workers working in elderly field to be aware of dealing with aging diseases since an early study conducted by the researcher with Alzheimer's patient families showed that families complain that social workers do not able to explain for them how to deal with the patient within the

family.

### **Study objectives**

Effectiveness testing of general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers working in the field of elderly patients of Alzheimer's and its characteristics.

- 1- Effectiveness testing of general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers of proper health care methods of patient.
- 2- Effectiveness testing of general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers of proper home care methods for patient.
- 3- Effectiveness testing of general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers of proper social and psychological care methods for patient.
- 4- Effectiveness testing of general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers of proper dealing with social and psychological problems for patient family.

### **Variables of the study**

#### **First concept: awareness**

The awareness is one's self-realization and what surrounds him directly. In other words, it is the basis of all knowledge. Awareness is a physiological function not an instinctive and it is a kind of tradition controlled by logical rules. (Badawi, G. Ahmad, 1993: 365).

It also refers to the one's full realization and attention. It may refer to a moment of awakening. Awareness extends to the thinking, memory, imagination and feelings. There is a difference between the supervisory awareness, that precedes the response, accompanies and adjusts it, and conscientious awareness accompanying or following the response, that may be accompanied with a sense of saturation or non-saturation resulting from the response. (Sheikh, P. Ahmad, 2007: 119).

#### **Awareness is identified in this study as follows:**

The social worker should be aware of proper care methods for Alzheimer's patient. He also should be able to identify patient's needs and requirements and meet them along with attention to risk factors that may harm the patient and factors that may prevent the analysis that can be measured through the degree which the social workers get in the form.

#### **Second concept: Alzheimer's**

Alzheimer's is a mental disorder that appears mainly in the elderly stage. The possible infection risk increases after the age of 85 years and affects women more than men but men may die by this disease faster than women. (Moussa K. Ibrahim, 2006: 61).

#### **Third concept: general practice**

The emergence of general practice concept is due to the early attempt of developing a unified concept of the social work practice that concentrates on a holistic view concept. (Memahon, 1990: 7)

Holistic view concept refers to the human being as an inclusive unit and it means the understanding of his constituent units as systems or interconnected parts that can be understood through studying these parts. While these parts are considered interconnected, they constitute integral human being. (Heam, 1990 : 3).

#### **Previous studies:**

Previous studies review will be limited to the most important studies relating to the research. These studies discussed the dealing with elderly field as study of Talaat Mansour that dealt with study of psychological trends towards the elderly and surrounding person's degree of acceptance (Talat Mansour, 1987)

Abdelhamid Muhammed Elshazly also conducted a study of some psychological and social variables that affect dealing with the elderly. (Elshazly, M. Abdelhamid, 1990)

The study of Sohier Kamel Ahmed also referred to the effect of the denial of the natural environment on the elderly and what the responsibility of dealing with these problems that social worker bears. (Ahmed, K. Sohier, 1991)

The study of Hanan Hassan dealt with that dimension through the social aspect and the role of the social worker in dealing with the elderly problems in care homes. (Hassan, Hanan, 1994)

The study of Abdel Nasser Saleh also discussed an analytical study of the social change manifestations associated with the social problems of the elderly in the Qatari society. (Saleh, Abdel Nasser, 2001)

Some studies professionally intervened with the elderly, including the study of Nasser Awais Abdel Tawab which applied the professional intervention of social service in order to alleviate the problems of an elderly family disharmony. (P. Tawab, Nasser, 2002)

The study of Abdul Rahman Mohammed Raafat applied logotherapy from the perspective of clinical social service on the life meaning for the elderly. (Mohammed, P. Rafat, 2010, 265 - 314)

## **The second dimension**

### **Studies in the field of Alzheimer's**

These studies dealt with problems associating with diseases resulting from old age, especially Alzheimer's. One of those studies is the study of Ezzat Sayed Ismail that dealt with identifying the psychological changes accompanying with the aging of memory and aging and how to deal with them by those around the elderly. (Ismail, Q. Izzat, 1982, 126 -161)

The study of Sami bin Abdul Aziz Al-damigh also dealt with social and health characteristics of people living with dementia and its effect on the elderly and surrounding persons. (Al-damigh, P. Samy, 2000, 427 - 456)

In addition to the study of Ahmed Mohammed Ahmed Awad which dealt with the study of the problems of the families of elderly patients with dementia and the perception of a proposal from the perspective of individual service to confront such disease. (M.M. Ahmed, Awad, 2001)

The study of Shadia Ahmed Abdul Khaleq also discussed the early signs of Alzheimer's in the light of some psychological and environmental predictors: A study of a sample of the disease-targeted and workers in teaching profession. (Abdul Khaleq, A. Shadia, 2005, 1045-1068)

The study of Atef Mustafa Mekkawi introduced a perception of planning care services for patients with Alzheimer's from the perspective of Social work. (Mekkawi, M. Atef, 2006)

The study of Inas Hussein Elsaid dealt with this aspect as it examined the improvement of non-governmental and governmental organizations role that provide their services to patients with Alzheimer's. (Elsaid, H. Inas, 2010)

While the study of Hanaa Ahmed Mohammed tried to determine the physical symptoms associating with aging stage, especially diseases associating with aging. (Muhammad, A. Hanaa, 2010, 167-210)

Some studies also pointed to the impact of Alzheimer's on the elderly family, such as the study of Shaima Mohammed Ramadan that addressed the social pressures of the families of elderly patients with Alzheimer's and determinants of work with it from the perspective of life model (M. Ramadan, Shaima, 2011).

In this aspect, the study of Tarif Youssef dealt with Alzheimer's patient's life within the family and its impact on family members as a whole. (Youssef, Tarif, 2013, 60 ; 26)

## **Third dimension**

### **Studies on general practice of social work with the elderly:**

There are many of studies on general practice of social work in many fields generally and one of these studies are the study of Maher Abo El-Maati who used entrance of the general practice of social service to deal with problems and social phenomena (A. Maher, 2000), and the study of general practice of social work conducted by Hisham Syed Majid: contemporary vision for education and practice of social work in the Arab world. (Q. Hisham, Abdul Majid, 2005, 3465-3500)

There are studies that addressed the intervention towards general practice with the elderly field in particular, and among them studies of Mohamed Mohamed Kamel and Al Jawhara Bint Fahd, Faten Mohammed Amer. The study of Mohamed Mohamed Kamel introduced a proposal perception from the perspective of the general practice of social facing problems resulting from the elderly begging. (Kamel, M. Mohammed, 2010: 5065 to 5097).

On the other hand, the study of Al Jawhara Bint Fahd, Faten Mohammed Amer dealt with the effectiveness of general practice in alleviating problems caused by the pressures of life among older women. (Fahd & Amer, M. Faten, 2011, 1810 : 1870)

The study of Asmaa Mohammed Ibrahim dealt with analyzing of the content of social work intervention studies in the frame work of general practice and its development indicators. (Ibrahim, M. Asmaa, 2011, 4077 : 4136)

The study of Zizit Mustafa, Ahmed Faker developed a proposed program for the general practice utilization in social work to develop elderly self-realization in care homes. (Zizit, Mustafa & Muhammad Faker, 2012, 1197-1303)

### **Questions of the study**

The main hypothesis of the study: There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers working in the field of elderly Alzheimer's.

#### **Such main hypothesis divided into sub-hypothesis as follows:**

1. There is a statistical significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers working in the field of elderly Alzheimer's of the physical and health care methods.
2. There is a statistical significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers working in the field of elderly Alzheimer's of disease

- nature methods.
3. There is a statistical significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers working in the field of elderly Alzheimer's of home care methods.
  4. There is a statistical significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work for raising the awareness of social workers working in the field of elderly Alzheimer's of social and psychological care methods.

**Tools**

1. Different kinds of interviews
  - Individual interviews, group interviews with social workers, to apply the program, that relate to the definition of Alzheimer's nature and care methods.
2. Measurements form of the awareness degree of social workers of Alzheimer's and care methods.
3. Type of study: The current study is one of experimental studies that rely on defining the effect of dependent variable (general practice) on independent variable (raising the awareness of social workers of Alzheimer's).

The used approach: the study is based on the experimental approach. The researcher chose the design of (a-b). Symbol (a) indicates to the process of identifying of baseline calculation for each individual case which is considered the starting point. Symbol (b) indicates to the calculation degree in order to measure the post measurement of intervention after the comparison. The comparison will be between the results of the baseline, the post measurement, the differences calculation and drawing conclusions.

**Fields of the study**

- a. The human field: social workers of non-governmental and governmental institutions working in the elderly field care, which affiliate to the Ministry of Social Affairs in Jeddah.
- b. The spatial field: non-governmental and governmental institutions working in the elderly field care, which affiliate to the Ministry of Social Affairs in Jeddah.
- c. The time field: about a year and half starting from the first semester 1435/1436 AH.

**Results**

Table No. 1 shows form degrees as a whole

Form No.	Prior measurement	Post measurement	D	D <sup>2</sup>
1. The first social worker	103	151	48	2304
2. The second social worker	108	159	51	2601
3. The third social worker	93	144	51	2601
4. The fourth social worker	92	151	59	3481
5. The fifth social worker	92	150	58	3364
6. The sixth social worker	89	175	68	4624
7. The seventh social worker	95	156	61	3721
8. The eighth social worker	88	129	41	1681
9. The ninth social worker	108	145	37	1369
10. The tenth social worker	93	156	63	3969
11. The eleventh social worker	98	135	37	1369
12. The twelve social worker				
Total	1059	1633	574	31084

$$D/ = \frac{\text{Total of Degrees}}{N}$$

$$D/ = 52.18$$

$$Q^2 D = 1 \% N - 1 (D^2 - \text{total of } (D)^2 \% N)$$

$$Q^2 D = .1 \times (31084 - \text{total of } (574)^2 \% 11)$$

$$Q^2 D = 113.6$$

$$T = D \sqrt{Q^2 D \% N}$$

The calculated T = 16.2

Whereas the calculated T is 16.2 > the Tabulated T = 2.08 on the significance level (0.05).

So, there are differences between the two measurements in favor of the post measurement. As a result, it is concluded that general practice was proven to be effective in raising the awareness of social workers of Alzheimer's.

The following table shows a validity of the study hypothesis that there is a statistical significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work and raising the awareness of social workers working in the elderly field of physical and health care methods.

Table No. 2 shows the first measurement degrees  
 Aspects of Physical health care for the patient

Form No.	Prior measurement	Post measurement	D	D <sup>2</sup>
1. The first social worker	21	29	8	64
2. The second social worker	20	29	9	81
3. The third social worker	20	27	7	49
4. The fourth social worker	19	24	5	25
5. The fifth social worker	17	24	7	49
6. The sixth social worker	19	27	8	64
7. The seventh social worker	12	27	15	225
8. The eighth social worker	20	29	9	81
9. The ninth social worker	20	28	8	64
10. The tenth social worker	15	22	7	49
11. The eleventh social worker	12	22	10	100
Total	195	288	93	851

$D/ = 8.45$

$Q^2 D = 6.46$

$T = 11.1$

Whereas the calculated T is 11.1 > the Tabulated T = 2.08 on the significance level (0.05).

So, there are differences between the two measurements in favor of the post measurement. As a result, it is concluded that general practice was proven to be effective in raising the awareness of social workers of Aspects of Physical health care for the patient.

The following table shows a validity of the study hypothesis that there is a statistical significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work and raising the awareness of social workers working in the elderly field of elderly Alzheimer's of disease nature methods.

Table No. 3 shows the second measurement degrees  
 Patient information

Form No.	Prior measurement	Post measurement	D	D <sup>2</sup>
1. The first social worker	25	34	9	81
2. The second social worker	30	37	7	49
3. The third social worker	26	34	8	64
4. The fourth social worker	22	32	10	100
5. The fifth social worker	22	39	17	289
6. The sixth social worker	31	39	8	64
7. The seventh social worker	28	40	12	144
8. The eighth social worker	19	28	9	81
9. The ninth social worker	19	32	13	169
10. The tenth social worker	27	40	13	169
11. The eleventh social worker	18	30	12	144
Total	267	385	118	1354

$D/ = 10.72$

$Q^2 D = 8.82$

$T = 11.9$

Whereas the calculated T is 11.9 > the Tabulated T = 2.08 on the significance level (0.05).

So, there are differences between the two measurements in favor of the post measurement. As a result, it is concluded that general practice was proven to be effective in raising the awareness of social workers of aspects of patient information.

The following table shows a validity of the study hypothesis that there is a statistical significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work and raising the awareness of social workers working in the elderly field of elderly Alzheimer's of home care methods.

Table No. 4 shows the third measurement degrees  
 Home care aspects

Form No.	Prior measurement	Post measurement	D	D <sup>2</sup>
1. The first social worker	18	29	11	121
2. The second social worker	19	34	15	225
3. The third social worker	19	32	13	169
4. The fourth social worker	14	33	19	361
5. The fifth social worker	16	25	9	81
6. The sixth social worker	18	29	11	121
7. The seventh social worker	14	33	19	361
8. The eighth social worker	16	25	9	81
9. The ninth social worker	20	29	9	81
10. The tenth social worker	15	73	22	484
11. The eleventh social worker	19	27	8	64
Total	188	333	145	2149

$D/ = 13.18$

$Q^2 D = 23.7$

$T = 8.9$

Whereas the calculated T is 8.9 > the Tabulated T = 2.08 on the significance level (0.05).

So, there are differences between the two measurements in favor of the post measurement. As a result, it is concluded that general practice was proven to be effective in raising the awareness of social workers of home care aspects.

The following table shows a validity of the study hypothesis that there is a statistical significant positive relationship between the general practice utilization in social work and raising the awareness of social workers working in the elderly field of social and psychological care methods.

Table No. 5 shows the fourth measurement degrees  
 Social and psychological care aspects

Form No.	Prior measurement	Post measurement	D	D <sup>2</sup>
1. The first social worker	39	59	20	400
2. The second social worker	39	59	20	400
3. The third social worker	28	51	23	529
4. The fourth social worker	37	62	25	625
5. The fifth social worker	37	62	25	625
6. The sixth social worker	21	62	41	1681
7. The seventh social worker	41	56	15	225
8. The eighth social worker	33	47	14	196
9. The ninth social worker	49	56	7	49
10. The tenth social worker	36	57	21	441
11. The eleventh social worker	49	56	7	49
Total	406	627	218	5225

$D/ = 19.8$

$Q^2 D = 90.46$

$T = 6.9$

Whereas the calculated T is 6.9 > the Tabulated T = 2.08 on the significance level (0.05).

So, there are differences between the two measurements in favor of the post measurement. As a result it is concluded that general practice was proven to be effective in raising the awareness of social workers of social and psychological care aspects.

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