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Introduction to Research Studies in Health and Social care

Research review systematic literature review

BSc level 5 in Health and Social care

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Research Title: Does childhood negligence lead to depression in adulthood for women

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1.0 Introduction to the research

This is a research review on the topic "Does childhood negligence lead to depression in adulthood for women." The research review is conducted to understand and recognise depression in women may have connections to childhood negligence, and other forms of trauma may be involved. Women experience different types of depression during various life stages, first relationship with partner, pregnancy, postpartum, and menopause are some to name. The biological and psychosocial factors contribute to the higher vulnerability of women to depression according to HD and MW (2021)

Awareness is being made more now than before through public education, early detection, organized national mental health programs, NHS, charities, GP settings, and work and educational sections have trained individuals you can have sessions with if needed. The NHS is limited in resources that could tackle the rising number of cases of female depression, this could be a cost-effective manner if early interventions were to take place such as during pregnancies, health visitors appointments, school settings, etc. All this could be extremely beneficial and prevent extreme events such as suicides.

1.1 Introduction

Depression is known as a serious condition and mental health issue that can impact every area of women's lives, from their social life, family relationships, raising children, career, and even their sense of self-worth and purpose ends up being questioned. There are many factors that contribute to the unique development of depression in women starting from childhood body changing events, reproductive hormones to social pressures, and the natural response that women's mind and the body do during stressful times. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), it is also the most important precursor of suicide and will be the second cause of Global Disease Burden by the year 2020, World Health Organisation also mentioned that the burden of depression is 50% higher for women than men.

1.2 Background to Depression in women

Many people still wait a long time before seeking help in depression there is no one main reason for depression it varies and there could be many reasons and different issues can be the trigger point. For some individuals, it could be a hurtful, upsetting, or stressful life event, like a bereavement, divorce, illness, trying to conceive and vice versa, job or money worries, all these can a cause. Different causes trigger depression in a combination of ways. Currently, people still think depression is not important as a physical illness may be and is not a genuine health condition. All this is a wrong conception as it is a real illness with real symptoms and depression is not a sign of weakness or something you can just live with, without getting treatments.

There are many factors affecting women's mental health such as the followings:

- Most women are likely to be the main carer for their children than men, and maybe care provider for older or disabled relatives too.
- Women are more likely to live in poverty and earn less than a man.
- Low-income homes, raise concerns about personal safety which can make women feel isolated, social isolation is connected to mental health issues.

- Physical and sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on women's mental health, especially if they have not received any support or help.
- Women are exposed to more sexual violence than men, which makes more women affected by PTSD.

When women find it difficult to talk about their feelings and internalise them, it can lead to issues such as depression and other disorders. They may end up expressing their emotional pain through self-harm, whereas men might act out of their feelings through disruptive or anti-social behaviour. One in four women experience depression compared to one in 10 men, it is not clear why this is, but circumstances like poverty, isolation, and hormonal changes are likely to make an impact, researchers have also mentioned that depression in men is under-reported. Around 10-20% of women experience depression while they are pregnant or after giving birth. The majority of people are aware of postnatal depression, which can happen around the first year after giving birth. But it is not known enough that women can experience antenatal depression while they are pregnant. Women also have a longer life expectancy than men, which means they are more likely to experience the mental health difficulties that occur whilst growing older. Older people can often be faced with more challenging life events and daily stresses than younger people, which can explain their increased risk of depression. Losses like bereavement or loss of independence can also trigger depression. About 40% of people in care homes have symptoms of depression according to this website (Women and mental health, 2021).

1.3 Statement of Depression

Individuals that may have a family history of depression are more likely to experience it themselves, however saying that you can become depressed for no obvious reason. Depression is more than just feeling down, unhappy, fed up, not in the mood, or even tired for days, a lot of people can go through long periods of feeling down, but when individuals are depressed, they feel constantly sad for several weeks, months, and years in some cases. Although a lot of people with depression benefit from making lifestyle changes for example more exercise, drinking less alcohol, not smoking, and changing their eating habits. Reading books on how to heal or maybe joining support groups is also helpful. These actions can help you understand what causes you to feel depressed, speaking and sharing your experiences with others who may have had similar situations can also be quite supportive (NHS, Overview - Clinical depression, 2021).

1.4 Justification of the research to "Does childhood negligence lead to depression in adulthood for women."

The reason for choosing this question is the fact that depression is a growing problem but more for women than men, not just in the United Kingdom but the whole world. Just in England, one in five women has common mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, or self-harm, having said that social and economic factors can have an impact on women far more than men. On the other hand, women usually find it easier to talk and express their feelings, they also have a stronger social network, which can help protect their mental health issues.

Women's mental health in the United Kingdom studies from the year 2016 showed that:

- 1 in 5 women compared to 1 in 8 men have a mental health issue

- A steady increase in the number of women experiencing mental health difficulties, with young women particularly at risk
- 1 in 5 women aged 16-25 reported a form of self-harming
- suicide rates in women were at their highest for a decade
- Rates of suicide and self-harm were higher in women, in minority ethnic communities compared to other women

With all this information I wanted to find out is there a link from childhood that may prevent this depression from growing in the future. Why women more than men? are women exposed to something different as children than men? Are women brought up in a fragile way? Are women taught to be more vulnerable? Does negligence in childhood have a connection to depression in women? All these questions were of interest however, the chosen question for the research was "Does negligence in childhood have a connection to depression in women?" furthermore I will define the significance of this question.

1.5 Significance of the research question “Does childhood negligence lead to depression in adulthood for women.”

There is huge significance to this question, it could be answered then depression can be prevented to somewhat degree. Neglect is the continuing failure to meet a child's basic needs which is the most common form of child abuse. This can put children and young people in danger and have long-term effects on their physical and mental health. Neglect can be a lot of different things but there are 4 types of neglect.

- **Physical neglect-** A child's basic needs like food, clothing, or shelter, are not met or given.
- **Educational neglect-** The caretaker does not give the child the correct level of education or support.
- **Emotional neglect-** The child does not receive the nurture and stimulation they need, such as being ignored, humiliated, intimidated, or isolating them.
- **Medical neglect-** the child not receiving correct health care, such as dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations

Neglect changes children significantly, children who are victims of neglect can have and experience short-term or long-term effects such as issues with the development of the brain development. In young people acts such as running away from home, using drugs and alcohol, or breaking the law. Some people may end up getting into dangerous relationships, or even difficulty with relationships in life including with their children. Neglected childhood gives a higher chance of having mental health issues including depression, this information was found on this website (NSPCC-Neglect, 2021).

2.0 Literature Review of negligence in childhood

Many literature reviews have proven that childhood negligence has an effect on adulthood including long-term or short-term mental health effects. However, the effects of neglect can range from chronic depression to difficulty with relationships but not all adults neglected as children will suffer from these results. Some individuals are more resilient than others and can move on from past neglected experiences. Consequences of neglect will generally have negatively affect the child's development. For example, poor nutrition has negative consequences on the child's physical and psychological development will not continue as normal and the child's development will not follow the usual pattern. Common physical and psychological effects of this action include stunted growth, chronic medical problems, inadequate bone, and muscle growth, and lack of neurological development that negatively affects normal brain functioning and information processing. Neglect often follows with other forms of abuse, but neglect is the one that is mostly overlooked. Health professionals have a key role to play in identifying the needs that are not met according to the (National Health Service, 2019).

2.1 Existing literature on Depression

When looking into patients with depression it is important to analyse and understand both personal history and family history of depression along with undertaking a diagnostic assessment. A wide range of biological, psychological, and social factors, which can be missed by current diagnostic systems, have a significant impact on the course of depression and the response to treatment. Existing literature proves that depression is a major public health issue due to its prevalence, high mortality rates, suicide risk, and economic impact on society. Depression by 2020 is expected to be among the two main causes of disability-adjusted years (DALYs). Depression can cause functional limitations which are equal to or even sometimes greater than many other chronic medical conditions. With all the great advances achieved in treatment for depression during the last decades, between 20 and 30% of cases are not adequately solved by first agent treatments. Previous reviews show depression has a link to other forms of abuse such as sexual, physical, maltreatment, emotional, and traumas that come with all this according to (Cambridge, 2019).

2.2 Gaps in the literature

The gaps identified are the ethnic groups as The United Kingdom is a very multicultural country having said that as women are the main suffers of depression a lot go unnoticed due to language barriers or not being able to read nor understand what help is available to different ethnicity groups. Women in these groups do not seek help as the subject of depression has a stigma attached and they will not ask for help either. Age is another factor according to (Gov, publishing, 2021). Mental health problems begin at 14 years of age and 75% of mental health problems start before the age of 18. The other gap that was noticed is that depression is referred to as a mental health issue and shows psychological effects but there some physiological connections to depression according to Brailovskaia and Margraf (2021) physical pain and depression are closely connected as there is a biological connection than the simple cause and effect strategy; the neurotransmitters that influence pain and mood are serotonin and norepinephrine, irregular transmitters are linked to both depression and pain.

2.3 Purpose of the research review

The goal of this review is to get a better understanding of the causes of depression, is there a connection between childhood negligence to women, aiming to find out if negligence has a link to women's depression in adulthood. Is it preventable if there is a link? It is a growing concern and matter as it is impacting society, government, and the individual's daily life.

2.4 Aims and objectives

The aim is to recognise at an early stage for example a mother during her postnatal period, applying prevention methods as the early intervention will help the mother and give a better chance for that child to grow in a better and positive environment. Objectives in this review are to prevent this from growing, catching the signs from as early as possible such as in childhood, alongside with the effectiveness of key workers like health visitors, midwives teachers would therefore give a good chance and option in trying to support or treat with the correct approach to the families.

2.5 Research question

Going back to the research question "Does childhood negligence lead to depression in adulthood for women?" So far there are clear links to this question, and it proves that it can start in childhood and can carry on if not treated nor recognised.

3.0 Research Methodology

The methods conducted for this research are many and as depression is a medical condition and is a mental health issue, a lot of the research is found from the National Health Service (NHS) websites. Other organisations such as the National Institute of Care Excellence (NICE) had a lot of qualitative information along with government publications reports.

3.1 Philosophical underpinning of the research

The understanding so far into this research is that it a very concerning matter and it is growing, a lot of people may have depression and can carry on with daily life such as work, but it takes a toll if not treated which leads to mental breakdowns. There is more awareness now than ever before which is a positive sign and great progress but working on prevention needs more work and recognition.

In the year 2013, the Chief Medical Officer's report on public mental health recognised "mental illness as the largest single cause of disability which represents 28% of the national disease burden in the UK. This is continuing to grow, and the impact of mental health problems is concerning. The mental health problems in the UK are also part of a wider global picture; mental health problems are one of the main causes of global disease burden now accounting for a fifth (21.2%) of years lived with disability worldwide." This information can be found on this page (Public mental health leadership and workforce development framework, 2021).

3.2 Data collection methods

The methods used to collect the data are PubMed, university library, NHS website, and governmental published reports as these had medical backgrounds and supporting evidence to give the authenticity to this research review.

3.3 Data sources for the research

The data sources are Google scholars, online medical journals, and websites like the NHS and other medical websites.

3.4 Keywords for research

Keywords used to search and find the pieces of literature are negligence, childhood negligence, depression in women, depression, causes of depression in women, adults, women and connections to childhood and adulthood depression.

3.5 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

choices of literature were UK based only, adult women, over 18, research from past ten years only, and connections from childhood negligence articles.

3.6 Data analysis

From all the data found, it is mostly qualitative research and a lot of them provide similar or same answers, such as childhood upbringing has a lot to do with adulthood's present situation whether it be a positive, neutral, or negative situation. The history of someone's life events will and can affect the personality and behaviours of someone in their adult life. Governmental reports have shown that people with mental health problems are anyone and everyone including professionals such as general practitioners (GP), nurses, health visitors, midwives, occupational therapists, social workers, pharmacists, psychologists, public health practitioners, relatives, and carers. All these individuals have stress and other forms of pressure burdens workload in common for depression.

3.7 Data summary table of journal articles

Author & title	Research objective	Methods & sample	Evaluation of the article
NHS	To understand depression	Clinical statements	Very clear and understandable
NSPCC	Childhood negligence connections	Many years of re-search	Agreeable and makes good awareness
Alexa Negele, Johannes Kaufhold and Marianne Leuzinger-Bohleber	depression in women linked to childhood negligence	349 depressed patients	Useful but cannot use as its not UK based study
Dr Jenifer Sassarini	Depression in women	In women-only sample size not mentioned	Is more related to the physiology of a women's body hormones
Otte C, Gold SM, Peninx BW, Pariante CM, Etkin A, Fava M, Mohr DC, Schatzberg AF	Major depression	117 women	It proves its hereditary factors and environmental effect
Gelaye B, Rondon MB, Araya R, Williams MA.	Family environment to see if finance affects depression and children	Generalized	Its making awareness of families who a deprived, if given correct support will have a bright future

3.8 Research ethics

The principle and guidance conducted for this research review are information and data that are only UK-based, along with a time limitation backdating only to the last ten years of research papers. Research and report that was conducted on women aged 18 and above only was the other criteria.

3.9 Limitations of the research

The limitations on the research are that it was the UK only and depression is affecting the globe. The age was a restriction as depression can occur from an early age and men can and are suffering with depression therefore if opted for all the above options would have had more results and data to review.

4.0 Secondary Data Analysis

Although there are links to depression due to childhood negligence and other factors such as all different abuse and trauma, it confirms depression can follow into adulthood and have an impact on the psychological aspect of the individuals. Questions now are being to arise of what physiological

effect it is having, according to (Harvard Health, 2021) researchers have understood and identified more about the biology of depression. They have identified genes that make individuals more vulnerable to low moods and influence how an individual responds to drug therapy. More research and investigations need to be done with correct results these discoveries should lead to better, and more individualized treatment. All these answers and results are years away. And while researchers know more now than ever before about how the brain regulates mood, their understanding of the biology of depression is far from complete.

4.1 Findings of Thematic analysis in review

Depression that is linked with childhood traumas or events has a consistency of caretakers being inconsistent with providing care, along with anxiety, sexual physical, and emotional abuse are also found as a common pattern. Stress and long working hours have been identified that have a link connection to depression. Other researchers have found hereditary connections to depression and the environment does play a role in depression as well.

5.0 Discussion

A lot of the research agreed and showed same knowledge and understanding of the connections to childhood negligence leading to depression in women as adults, especially the NHS websites and other organisations like NSPCC recognise this and are making awareness more.

5.1 Synthesis of your findings to the research question

To combine all the research, it is understood that childhood events have a large part to play in adulthood depression and the aim is to combat it as a nation together as it is taking a heavy burden on people's lives and the NHS is being burdened with more than it can handle.

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This review aimed to find out is there a connection to childhood negligence that can lead to depression in adulthood for women, and the answer is yes there is a high possibility for this to happen. Although there are some contradictory facts of some women can have a healthy life despite their childhood negligence the research finding in that area is less compared to being depressed. Depression can happen to anyone you do not need to have a connection to childhood life traumas. Highly professionals can be depressed and have a normal life, but help is available in the United Kingdom and you may not always have to go to your GP for referrals you can refer yourself to counselling therapy and other holistic help. The recommendations identified in this review is for key workers to report and be more conscious of early intervention as this will help and prevent depression, and it will help and support as whole not just the individual as depression is affecting the country and the NHS.

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