

Prevalence and Sex Distribution of Covid-19 Infection in the Elderly in an Isolation Centre in Southern Nigeria

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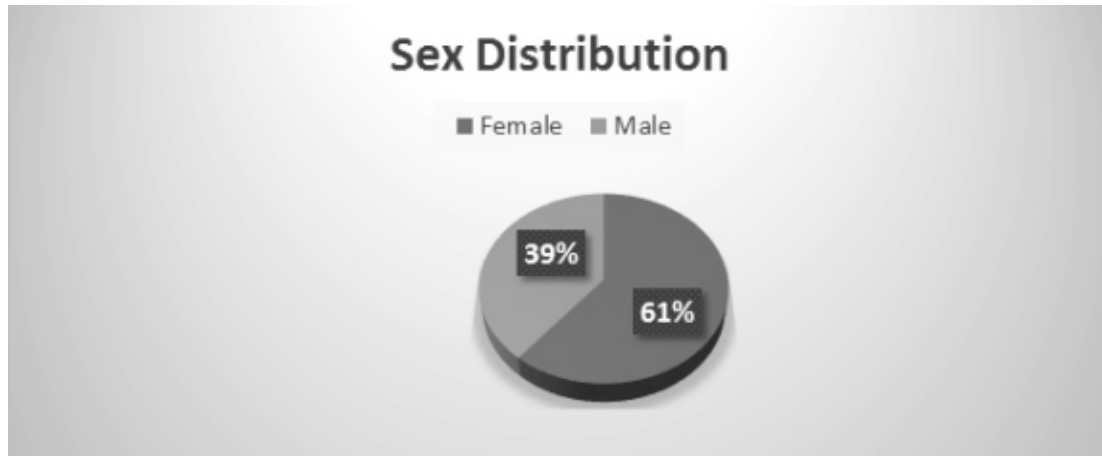
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Background: Covid-19 infection is a global pandemic with devastating effects on the health of everyone and economy of the general populace. The elderly who are vulnerable age to disease conditions due to co-morbidities like hypertension, diabetes and other disease conditions have more severe effects of Covid-19 infections.

Methods: This was a prospective cross-sectional study of elderly Covid-19 positive patients. Permission for the study was granted by the Director of Public Health, Rivers State Ministry of Health. The age range for the elderly was 60 years and above (WHO standard). Informed consent was obtained from the subjects. The data collected was analysed using SPSS version 25.

Results: Fifteen (6.25%) elderly subjects were positive for Covid-19 infection out of the 240 subjects that were positive. There were 10 (66.7%) males and 5 (33.3) females. The mean age was 66.4 years and the age range was 60 – 80 years. The prevalence of covid-19 infection among the male subjects was 10 (4.17%) while for the female subjects was 5 (2.08%). Six (40%) of the men were hypertensive compared to 3 (20%) of the women. Four (26.7%) of the men were diabetic and 2 (13.3%) women were diabetic.



Variable	Number	Percentage
Age		
60-65	7	46.7
65-69	3	20
=70	5	33.3
Total	15	100

Discussion: Global dashboard 188,655,968 cases as at the time of compiling this work, 4,067,517 deaths and 3,402,275,866 vaccine doses administered.¹ In Africa approaching 5 million cases.¹ In Nigeria data difficult uploading. The study revealed the prevalence of Covid-19 infection amongst the elderly as 6.25%.

The prevalence of covid-19 infection among the elderly was 4.17% compared to the females which were 2.08%. This means that the infection rate was twice as much in men when compared to women. This may be due to some factors such as men even in their sixties are still active as bread winners and still go out to fend for their families and by so doing are exposed to contacting the virus. In addition, some of these indigenous persons do not accept that covid-19 is real as a result of beliefs which may be cultural or tradition

Co-morbidities of hypertension and diabetes were higher in the men when compared to the women.

The effects of covid-19 pandemic has been

amplified in the elderly in several ways, ranging from psychological effects of the lockdown such as anxiety and depression.¹⁻
⁴ In addition, elderly persons with co-morbidities may find it difficult to access medications during the pandemic.⁵⁻⁸

Conclusion: The elderly persons are vulnerable when it comes to covid-19 infection. The prognosis of the disease burden is poor especially when they have co-morbidities like hypertension and diabetic and are not compliant with their medications. Those in this age group need care and support taking into consideration public health preventive measures in line with NCDC.

Keywords: Prevalence, sex, distribution, covid-19, southern Nigeria.

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