

Medical Survey: The Preferred Age and Gender of Therapists According to Patients with Mental Illness

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Abstract: *This study aims to explore the preferences of mental illness patient regarding to the age and gender of their therapists. A sample of 261 patients with mental disorders were involved in this study. Statistical information was obtained from a survey which categorized the participated patients according to their age, gender, current relationship, education and socioeconomic level. Finally, the output results was expressed graphically to provide a clear situation and evaluation which is describe the preferences for patients with mental illness regarding to the age and gender of their therapists.*

Keywords: *Mental Illness, Statistical analysis, Preferred Age, Preferred Gender of Therapists.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Generally, many people believe that mental disorders are infrequent and always happen to someone else other than the person who knows him. Indeed, a mental illness is a disease that causes disturbances that range from mild to severe in either thought and/or behavior, resulting in a problem to deal with life's usually demands [1]. Many symptoms are associated with this disease such as changes in mood, personality, depression, disability and inability to sleep [2]. The specifications of the treating physician for patients with mental problems in terms of age and gender in form of statistics and questionnaire is a popular form used to investigate differences in patients' opinions about this issue. Statistics in research is not just about formulas and calculations [3]. In fact, a lot of wrong conclusions have been performed from not amitying basic statistical issues [4]. In this study, statistics deduction helps us to obtain significant conclusions from samples of 261 patients of ages ranges from 20 to 70 years old from both genders, males and females.

II. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This statistics survey provides a guide to help understanding some key concepts of choosing the treating doctor for mental illness patients. In this research, 261 patients with mental disorder were asked different questions about what mental illness patients prefer to be their treating doctors at any age and of any gender. 39 patients were between 20 and 30 years of age, or 14.49 %. In addition to this, 80 patients aged 30 to 40 were asked with a percentage of about 30.65 %. In this research as well, there was a sample of people aged between 40 and 50 years and the sample represented a sector of 21.46%. Other patients aged 50 to 60 were also asked and the sample accounted for 18.01% of the total sample population. Finally, patients aged 60 to 70 formed 14.49% of the samples. Figure (1) below illustrates the percentages and the numbers of this questionnaire.

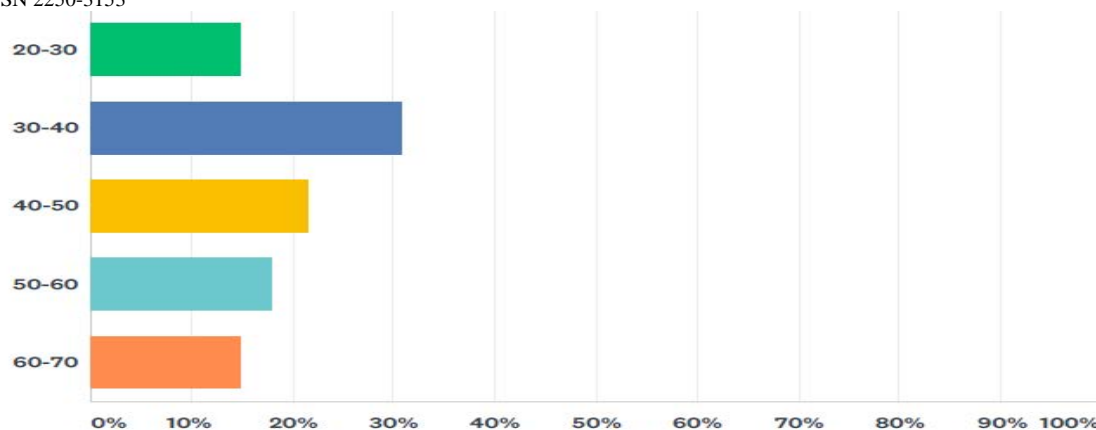


Fig (1): The Percentages of the Ages of the Participants

However, the sample of patients was normally distributed since there were 125 of the sample from males and about 135 were females and there was only one skipped person. Indeed, figure (2) below represents the percentages of the genders of patients who were asked

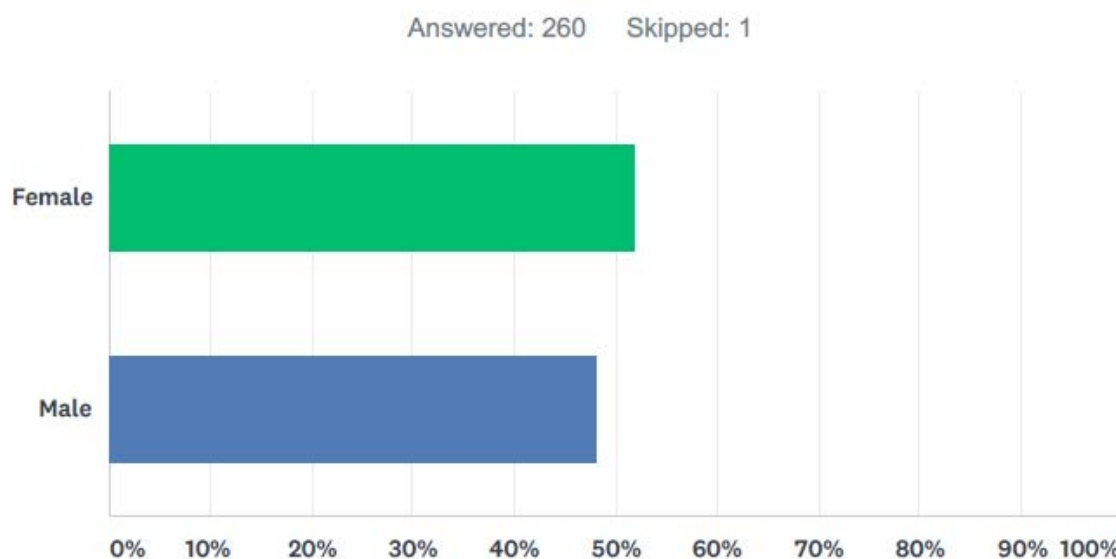


Fig (2): The Percentages of the Genders of the Participants

The majority of the involved patients who participated in the questionnaire was married with a social status that reflects 66.54% of the total survey sample. Just 2 persons were widowed. Only 8 persons of the sample interviewed were divorced. The rest of the sample never experienced the marriage. Figure (3) below represents the percentages of the status relationships of the people that participated in the questionnaire.

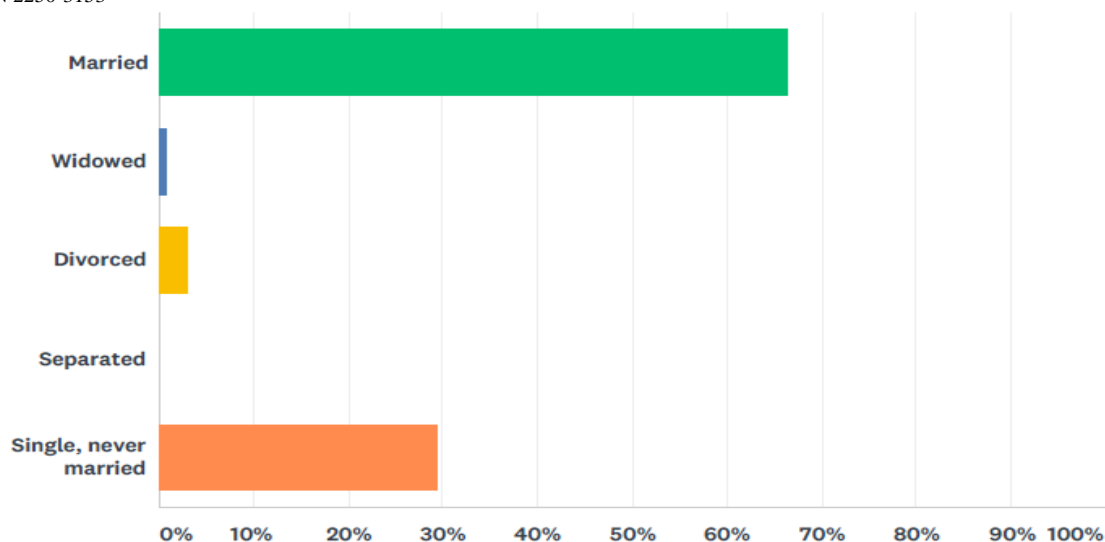


Fig (3): The Current Status Relationship of the Participants

To determine the educational level of the persons involved in the sample, they were divided into 6 groups. The first group of involved patients represents the group who did not enter schools at all, indeed, this group contains 23 persons. The second group accounted for 1% and contains 18 people actually. This group consists of patients who graduated from high schools only. The third group contains people who graduated from college. In fact, this group, contains 40 persons. The majority of the persons involved in the sample has appeared in the fourth group. This group contains about 89 persons, all of them were participated in some graduate school. The sample which contains persons who completed graduate school is not considered a small sample really. This group consists of 69 persons. The last group contains persons who finished their university with high degree. This group contains of about 22 persons. Figure (4) below illustrates the percentages of people participated in this questionnaire according to their level of education.

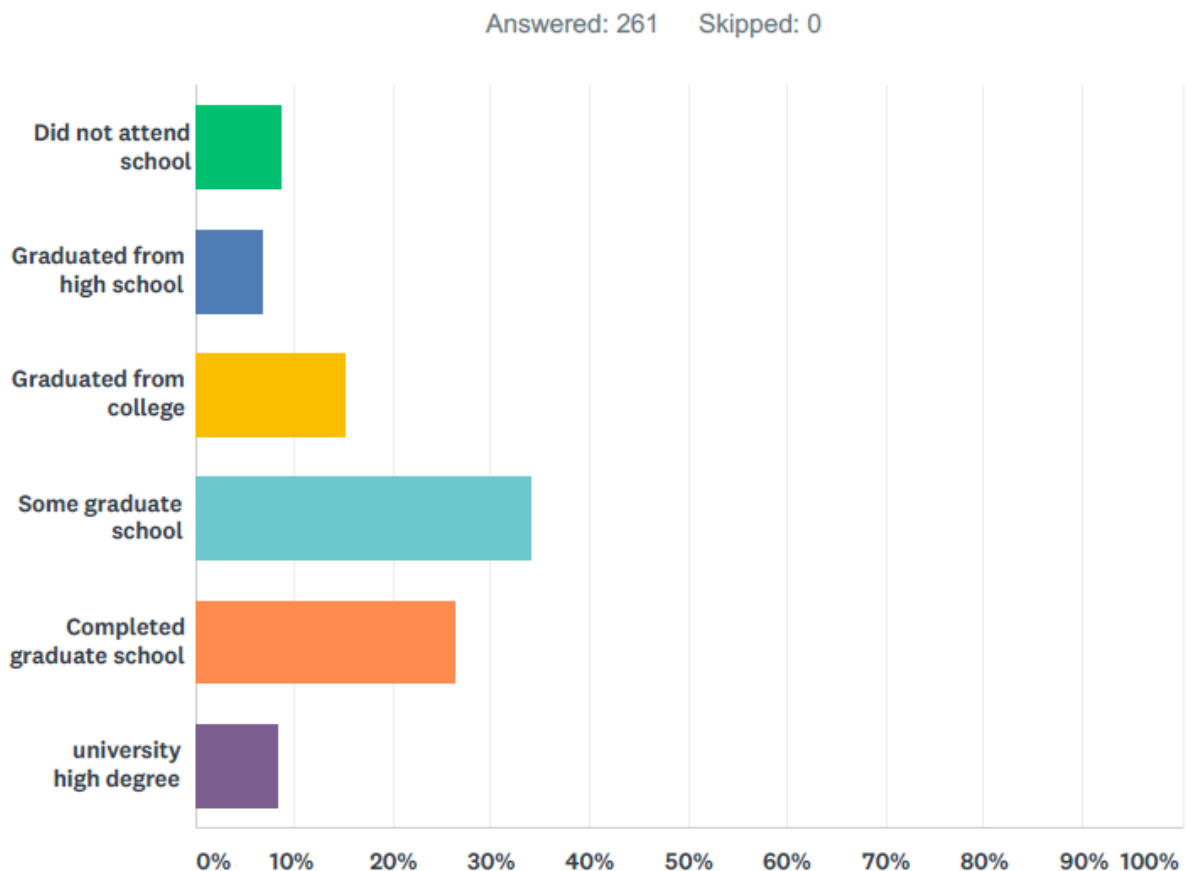


Fig (4): The Percentage of People According to Their Level of Education

Patients were classified according to their socioeconomic class into three groups, which were low, mild and high. Indeed, the first and third groups were too similar, they contain 44 and 43 persons respectively. The second group contains 169 persons, this number forms a percentage of 66.06%. In fact, when analyzing these percentages, we can observe easily that the majority of people involved in this questionnaire are of mild level, figure (5) below represents the percentages of people involved in the questionnaire according to their socioeconomic classification.

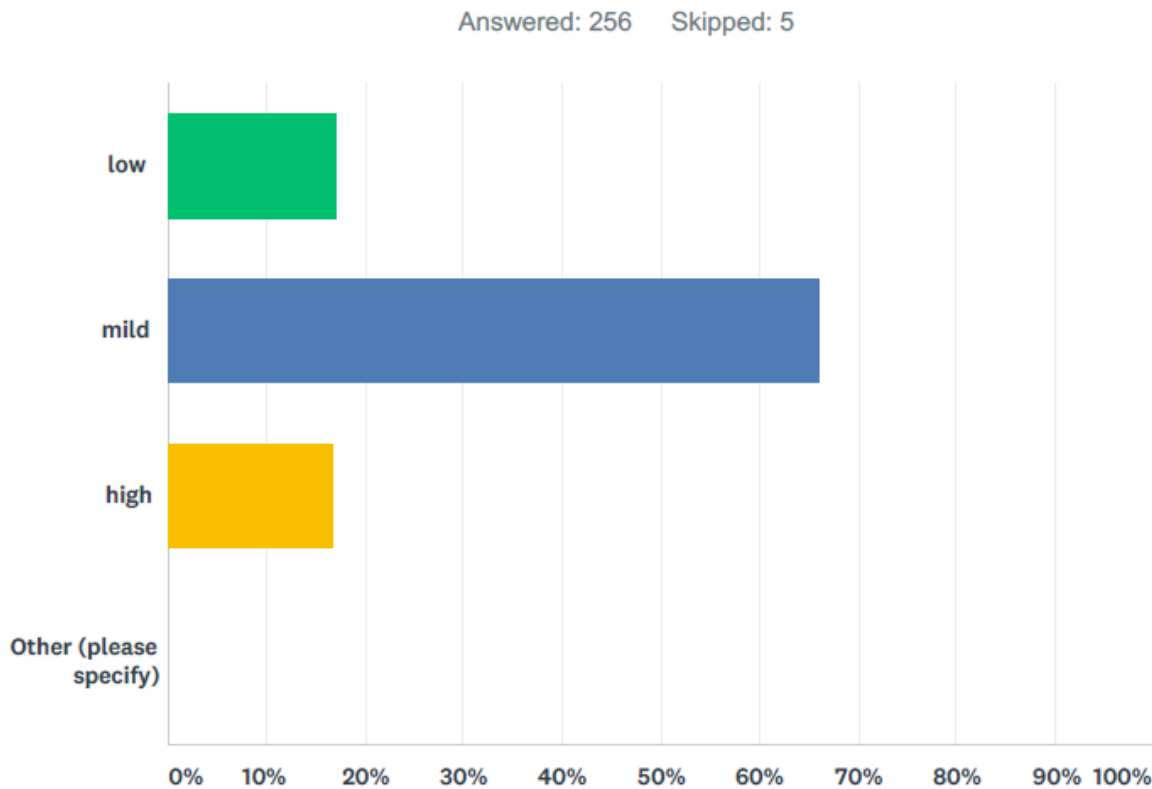


Fig (5): The Percentage of People According to their Socioeconomic Class

This research study treats a phenomenon which is, in general, considered ethically problematic, then the true experimental design is replaced by this quasi-experimental approach [5]. Figure (6) below illustrates good information to point out the advantage of this study

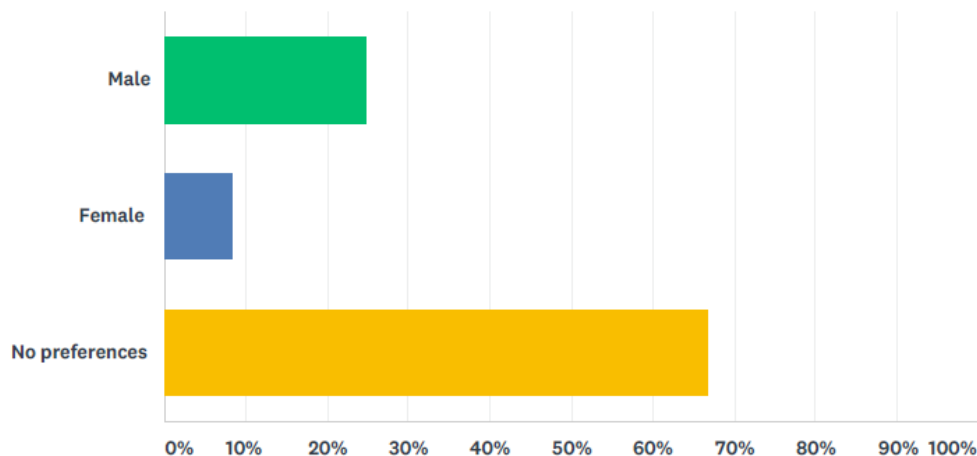


Fig (6): The Percentage of the Choice of the Participants to their Treating Doctors According to Gender

As it is shown in the figure, most of the people who participated in this study (about 66.67%) do not prefer a specific gender of their treating doctors either males or females. Indeed, 24.90 % of the people participated in the study prefer their treating doctors to be males. On the other hand, only 8.43 % of the participants in this study prefer the gender of their doctors to solve their mental illness problems from females.

Figure (7) below, illustrates the answer to a significant question in this study. Participants were asked about the age of the treating therapists. And it was noted that most participants do not prefer a specific age of the doctor answered this question about 157 people, which is what accounted for more than 60%. What is unique in the study is that very few, specifically four people, only wanted to be their treating physician between the ages of 60 and 70 years. Furthermore, 27 participants prefer their treating doctors to be in ages range between 30 and 40 years old. In addition, 39 of the participants in the study, preferably the age of their doctors treated between 40 and 50 years. Not far from this figure, 33 people preferred a treating doctor aged between 50 and 60 years.

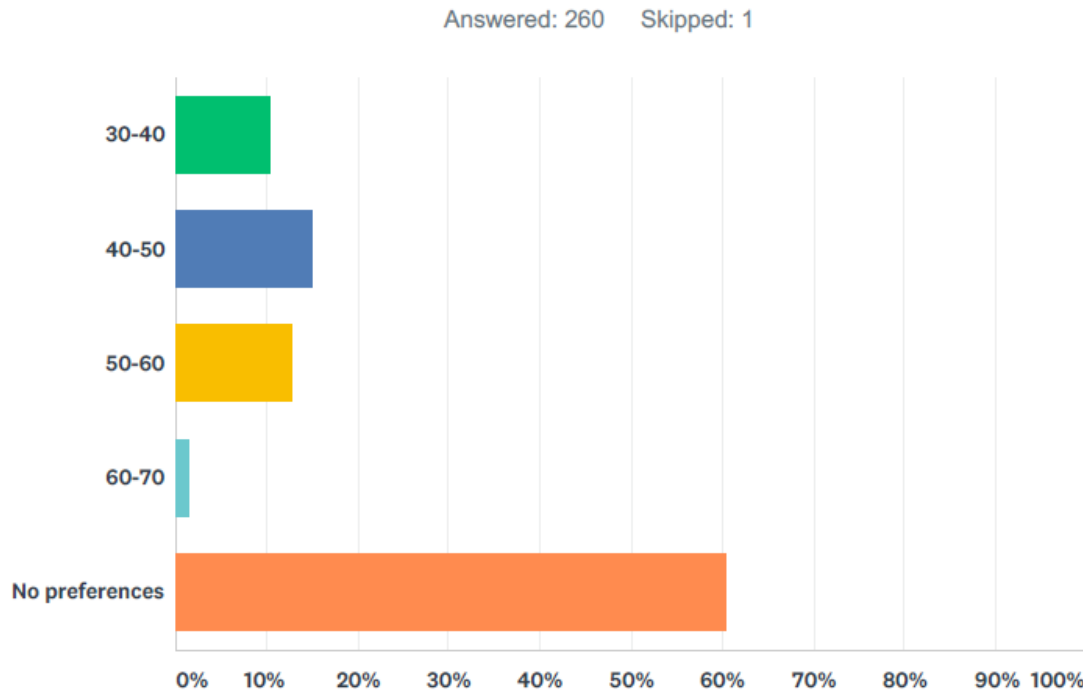


Fig (7): The Percentage of the Choice of the Participants to their Treating Doctors According to Age

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study aims to correlate statistical information about age and gender of therapists with a preference of patients with mental illness. This survey provides a clear situation and evaluation of patients with mental illness regarding to the age and gender of their therapists. The output of this study shows that there is a low preference to specific age and gender. Only 15% and 10% of the total patients who was involved in the survey have specific preferences for therapists age (40-50) and (30-40) respectively. On the other hand, around 25% of mental illness patients would like to choose male therapists compared to 15% who preferred female. Finally, more than 65% of patients who was covered in this study don't have any specific preferences for age and gender of their therapists.

In fact, some limitations faced the direction of this survey, so it is important to mention these limitations and restrictions to provide some possible improvement in future research to overcome these limitation. One of the limitations is that patients with mental disorders do not like to talk about their mental problems in front of anybody. Another problem faced by the study was the size of the sample as 261 patients, which is relatively few to launch generalizations and obtain demonstrated conclusion.

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