كلية الصحة العامة الفلسطينية
Palestinian School of Public Health
القدس- فلسطين
جامعة القدس
وزارة الصحة

PSYCHOSOCIAL PROBLEMS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSERS ATTENDING EL-NASER PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, GAZA.

By:

ZUHAIR MUSTAFA RASSAS

Supervisor:

SALAH A. EL-SUSI (Ph.D.)

Co-supervisor:

Mohamed F. Afifi (M.D.; M.Sc.)

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Mental Health at Al-Quds University

August 2001

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Endorsement

Thesis title

PSYCHOSOCIAL PROBLEMS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSERS ATTENDING EL-NASER PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, GAZA.

Supervisor	Title
Dr. Salah A. El-Susi	Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Signature Date 25/8/2001

Co-Supervisor	Title
Dr. Mohamed F. Afifi	Master of Science in Medicine

Signature Date 25/8/2001

External examiner	Title
Dr. Mohamed G. Al-Khateeb	Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Signature Date 25.8.2001

Internal examiner	Title
Dr. Yehia Abed	Ph.D., Associate Professor

Signature Date 25.8.2001

DEDICATION

TO MY FAMILY -----

INTIFADA MARTYRS-----

STATE OF PALESTINE---

ZUHAIR M. RASSAS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I gratefully express my thanks to all that have assisted me in the preparation of this study. My sincere gratitude goes to the Director General of Palestinian National Guidance **Mr. Mazen Aez-Adeen** for his continual encouragement and endless support. Thanks and Appreciation to my uncle **Mahmood Abu-Zalaf** for his financial help and support, **Dr. Marwan Abu-Zalaf**, and **Mr. Ahmad Al- Zebak.**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Dean of Palestinian School of Public of Health **Dr. Yahia Abed,** and **Dr. Abedelaziz Thabet** for their advice, kind help and endless support, and **Dr. Suzanne Shasha'a** for her contribution in this work

Thanks and Appreciation to my supervisors **Dr. Salah El-Susi**, **Dr. Mohamed El- afifi**, and **Dr. Mohamed Gawad Al-khateeb** for their great advice and guidance. Special thanks and appreciates for **Mr. Reyad Afifi** , **Mr. Aa'ed El-Raba'e** and **Miss Neda'a Temraz** for their crucial observations as statisticians.

I gratefully acknowledge every body of the **Staff of the Psychiatric Hospital.**

My thanks extended to those entire not mentioned in person and who contributed in any way during this research.

I would like to express my warmest gratitude to **my family** for the tolerance shown during the years of studying and writing this thesis.

ABSTRACT

The present work is a cross sectional study conducted at EL-Naser Psychiatric Hospital in Gaza Strip - Palestine, in the year 2001.

Overall aim: This study aims to determine the comorbidity of psychosocial problems among substance abusers according to abused substances, and psychological disorders and its prevalence.

The study also determines the common abused substances among outpatients' substance abusers.

This is to provide reliable information that may help both therapists and policy makers to improve the management and control of substance abuse problem in Palestine.

Methods : 85 outpatient substance abusers attending El-Naser Psychiatric Hospital during a two month study period were interviewed separately by the investigator, and a structured questionnaire was used to collect data , The psychological disorder was measured by using GHQ-28 and substance abuse was determined by using DSM-IV criteria. The association between substance abuse and psychological disorders was assessed by using one way ANOVA.

Results : Prevalence of psychological disorders among drug abusers was (**92.9 %**), and patients were categorized as clinical cases according to GHQ scale. On the other hand, anxiety disorder (89.4 %) was the specific measure disorder of highest value, social dysfunction (87.1 %), somatic disorder (78.8 %) and depression (77.6 %) which was the lowest disorder. In the present study, Bango abusers with psychological health disorders mean (mean 12.11), were suffering the lowest psychological disorders on GHQ scale than alcohol abusers (mean 22.75), coke abusers (mean 18.95), and Psychotropic abusers (mean 20.58). The results showed that abused substances which were used compulsively and dependently by the abusers were : Coke (54.1 %), Bango and Hashish (21.2 %), Psychotropic (20 %), and Alcohol (4.7 %). Bango and Hashish (58.8 %) were the first abused substances, and Psychotropic (48.2 %) was the last abused substances.

Conclusions: Psychological disorder prevalence was high (92.9%) among substance abusers due to a long history of substance dependence, and their multiple competing life stressors, such as their ongoing need to satisfy drug dependence and social and economical livelihood as well as their poor mental health. Interventions designed to reduce psychological disorder, continuous social and economical helps and comprehensive treatment – rehabilitation programs in a separate specialized center are important and urgent need to be integrated with mental health services.

KEY WORDS: Gaza Strip, Palestine, Psychosocial disorders, Substance Abusers.

ملخص

الضغوطات النفسية والإجتماعية لدى المرضى المدمنين على المخدرات المراجعين لمستشفى النصر للصحة النفسية بقطاع غزة .

تم إجراء هذة الدراسة المقطعية على المرضى المدمنين المراجعين للعيادة الخارجية لمستشفى النصر للصحة النفسية بقطاع غزة – فلسطين خلال عام 2001 ، وكان **الهدف** منها تحديد مدى العلاقة المرضية بين الإدمان على المخدرات والمشاكل والضغوطات النفسية والإجتماعية التى يعانون منها بسبب التعاطى المستمر لأنواع مختلفة من المخدرات، وتحديد نسبة إنتشار هذة الضغوطات النفسية والإجتماعية بينهم وتحديد أنواع المخدرات المختلفة التى تعاطاها المرضى المدمنين خلال فترة إدمانهم لفترات طويلة ومستمرة، وذلك بهدف توفير معلومات صادقة للمعالجين ومتخذى القرارلتحسين الخدمة الطبية والتأهيلية للمرضى المدمنين فى فلسطين .

الأدوات : ولقد تم إستخدام أسلوب المقابلة الشخصية الفردية مع كل مدمن مريض وتم إستخدام إستبيان خاص لجمع البيانات من 85 مريضا" مدمنا"على المخدرات المختلفة بحسب الملفات والتشخيص الطبى والنفسى. وإستخدم الباحث مقياس الصحة(GHQ-28) لتحديد الإضطرابات النفسية واستخدم مقياس الدليل التشخيصى الرابع للأمراض النفسية(DSM-IV) لتحديد المدمنين والمتعاطين للمواد المخدرة. ولتحديد العلاقة بين الإدمان على المخدرات والإضطرابات النفسية تم استخدام تحليل One way ANOVA .

النتائج : كانت نتائج البيانات المجموعة فى هذة الدراسة كالتالى : أكثر أنواع المخدرات تعاطيا" وإدمانا" بين المدمنين هو الكوك (54.1 %) ، البانجو (21.2 %) ، أدوية نفسية مخدرة (20 %) ، كحول (4.7 %) ، وتبين أن البانجو والحشيش (56.5 %) هو أكثر المخدرات تعاطيا" فى بداية تجربة التعاطى كأول مخدر ، وأن الأدوية النفسية المخدرة (48.2 %) هى أكثر المخدرات تعاطيا" كأخر تجربة للتعاطى الحالى بين المدمنين.

وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن حوالى (**92.9 %**) من المدمنين يعانون من إضطرابات نفسية وأعتبروا حالات مرضية بحسب مقياس الصحة المستخدم ، وتبين أن حوالى (89.4 %) يعانون بالدرجة الأولى من القلق والتوترالنفسى وهو الأكثر انتشارا" بينهم، يلية العزلة الأجتماعية (87.1 %)، ثم المعاناة من الإضطرابات الجسدية (78.8 %) وأخيرا" المعاناة من.الإكتئاب (77.6 %). كما لوحظ فى الدراسة أن هناك فروقا" ذات دلالة إحصائية فى متوسط الإضطرابات النفسية بين مدمنى الكحول (متوسط 22.75) أكثر من مدمنى البانجو (متوسط12.11) ، وكذلك وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية فى كل من متوسط الإضطرابات النفسية بين مدمنى الكوك (متوسط 18.95)

و مدمنى الأدوية النفسية (متوسط 20.58) أكثر من مدمنى البانجو (متوسط 12.11) ولم تتضح أى فروق إحصائية بين مدمنى الكوك ومدمنى الأدوية المخدرة النفسية .

الإستنتاجات : الضغوطات النفسية كانت منتشرة بدرجة عالية (92.9%) بين المدمنين فى الدراسة وذلك لطول مدة إدمانهم على المواد المخدرة وما صاحبة من ضغوطات الإنقطاع عن المخدر ومشاكل حياتية سواء إجتماعية أو إقتصادية. وبناءا" على النتائج المذكورة فى الدراسة فلابد من التأكيد على ضرورة التدخل المبكر وإستخدام البرامج الوقائية والتأهيلية لمنع الوقوع فى براثن آفة الإدمان. ويوصى الباحث كذلك بضرورة إستخدام برامج العلاج الشامل ضمن مركز علاجى وتأهيلى متخصص الذى يشمل بالإضافة للعلاج الطبى كلا" من التأهيل المهنى والأسرى والمجتمعى من أجل التخفيف من الضغوطات النفسية والمجتمعية الشديدة التى يعانيها المرضى المدمنين.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
DEDICATION	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	III
ENGLISH ABSTRACT	IV
ARABIC ABSTRACT	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS	VII
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	X
LIST OF TABLES	XII
LIST OF FIGURES	XIV
LIST OF ANNEXES	XV
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	**1**
1.1 OVERVIEW	1
1.2 OVERALL AIM	4
1.3 OBJECTIVES	4
1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY	4
CHAPTER 2 SITUATION ANALYSIS	**5**
2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW	5
2.2 THE HEALTH SYSTEM	6
2.3 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN GAZA	6
2.4 THE PALESTINIAN ANT- DRUG ADMINISTRATION	7
2.5 SCALE OF THE PROBLEM	8
2.5.1 Scale of the problem in Palestine	10
CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW	**12**
3.1 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS	12
3.1.1 Psychosocial problems	12
3.1.2 Drug (Substance)	12
3.1.3 Substance Abuse	13
3.1.4 Substance Dependence	14
3.2 DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCE	15
3.3 THE CLASSES OF ABUSED SUBSTANCES	16
3.3.1 Alcohol	17
3.3.2 Opioids	19
3.3.3 Cocaine	20
3.3.4 Amphetamines	21
3.3.5 Sedatives, Hypnotics, and Anxiolytic	22
3.3.6 LSD	23
3.3.7 Cannabis	24
3.4 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ASSOCIATED PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS	26
3.4.1 Comorbidity status	27
3.4.2 Anxiety disorder	30

3.4.3 Depression disorder 31
3.4.4 Comorbidity treatment 32
3.5 PREDISPOSING RISK FACTORS 32
3.5.1 Biological and Psychological Characteristics 33
3.5.1.1 Biological characteristics 33
3.5.1.2 Psychological characteristics 34
3.5.2 Drug use initiation 35
3.5.3 Peer Correlates 36
3.5.4 Familial Determinants 37
3.6 GENERAL TREATMENT PRINCIPLES AND ALTERNATIVES 40

CHAPTER 4 MATERIALS AND METHODS 43

4.1 STUDY DESIGN 43
4.2 SETTING 43
4.3 STUDY POPULATION 43
4.4 THE SAMPLE 44
4.4.1 PARTICIPATION CRITERIA 44
4.4.2 SAMPLE SELECTION 44
4.5 MATERIALS 45
4.5.1 Questionnaire 45
4.5.1.1 The DSM IV Dependence criteria 46
4.5.1.2 The GHQ-28 Scale 46
4.5.2 Reviewing patients files 47
4.5.3 The investigator's observations 47
4.6 THE STUDY LIMITATIONS 47
4.7 ETHICAL ISSUE 48
4.8 PILOT STUDY 48
4.9 DATA ANALYSIS 48
4.10 CITATION AND REFERENCING METHOD 49

CHAPTER 5 RESULTS 50

5.1 Characteristics of the patients (DSM IV) 50
5.2 Characteristics of the patients (GHQ-28) 50
5.3 Socio-Demographic Characteristic 51
5.3.1 Age distribution 51
5.4 Distribution of four psychological health disorders in GHQ scale 53
5.5 Distribution of psychological health disorders among patients by age 53
5.6 Distribution of all patients by type of abused substances 55
5.7 Distribution of different types of drugs by period of use 57
5.8 Relationship between abused drugs and psychological health disorders 59
5.9 The relationship between education level and psychological disorders 66
5.10 Relationship between original occupation and psychological disorders 66
5.11 Relationship between current occupation and psychological disorders 67
5.12 Relationship of marital status and psychological health disorders 74
5.13 Relationship of age of start smoking and psychological health disorders 74
5.14 Relationship between age of first drug use and psychological disorders 74
5.15 Distribution of patients by dependence periods in years and psychological disorders 77

5.16 Distribution of patients by last time of using substance and psychological disorders 77
5.17 Distribution of substance abusers by main reasons for starting first substance use 78
5.18 Distribution of patients satisfaction on psychiatric hospital medical services 79
5.19 The association between psychological disorders and type of services needed by patients 80
5.20 Results of observation and revised patients files data 83

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION **85**

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS **94**

7.1 CONCLUDING REMARKS 94
7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS 96
7.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK 98

GLOSSARY **99**
REFERENCES **102**
ANNEXES **110**

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APA	American Psychiatric Association
CNS	Central Nervous System
DSM	Diagnostic And Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder
ECA	Epidemiological Catchments Area
HIMS	Health Information Management System
GHSRC	Gaza Health Service Research center
GHQ	General Health Questionnaire
LSD	Lysergic Acid Diethylamide
PHC	Primary Health Care
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PA	Palestinian Authority
PADA	Palestinian Anti Drug Administration
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
MOH	Ministry of Health
NIDA	National Institute on Drug Abuse
NIAAA	National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OTC	Over The Counter
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
SARC	Substance Abuse Research Center
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration
THC	Tetrahydrocannabinol

UNIDCP	United Nation International Drug Control Program
UNRWA	United Nations For Relief and Working Agency
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization

LIST OF TABLES

Page

Table-1: Distribution of General Health Scale among study population. 50

Table-2 Socio-Demographic characteristic among study population. 52

Table 3-: Distribution of four psychological health disorders. 53

Table-4: Distribution of psychological health disorders by patients age. 55

Table-5: Distribution of dependent drugs among study population. 55

Table-6:. Distribution of different types of drugs by period of use 57

Table-7: Relationship between abused drugs and psychological health disorders. 59

Table-7.1 Description of Tuky HSD of abused drugs by psychosocial problems. 60

Table-7.2 Description of Tuky HSD of somatic disorder by abused drugs. 61

Table-7.3 Description of Tuky HSD of social dysfunction by abused drugs. 61

Table-7.4 Description of Tuky HSD of behavior problems by abused drugs 62

Table-7.5 Description of Tuky HSD of general health status by abused drugs. 63

Table-8: Relationship between education level and psychological disorders. 66

Table-9: Relationship between original occupation and psychological disorders. 67

Table-10.1: Relationship between current occupation and psychological disorders 68

Table-10.2: Description of Tuky HSD of anxiety problems by current occupation. 69

Table-10.3 : Description of Tuky HSD of general health problems by current occupation. 69

Table-10.4: Description of Tuky HSD of psychosocial problems. by current Occupation. 70

Table-10.5: Description of Tuky for somatic problems by current occupation. 70

Table-10.6: Description of Tuky for behavior problems by current occupation. 71

Table-11 Relationship between marital status and psychological health disorders. 73

Table-12: Relationship between age of start smoking and psychological disorders 74

Table-13.1: Relationship between age of first drug use and psychological disorder 75

Table-13.2: Description of Tukey for depression. by age of first drug use 76

Table-13.3: Description of Tukey HSD for behavior of by age of start drug use. 76

Table-14: Distribution of patients by dependence period in years and psychological health disorders 77

Table-15: Distribution of all patients by Last time of using substances and psychological health disorders 78

Table-16: Distribution of substance abusers by main reasons for starting substance use. 79

Table-17: Distribution of patients satisfaction of services in hospital . 80

Table-18: Distribution of psychological health problems by type of needed services 80