

## معدل انتشار الادمان الدوائي بين المرضى المراجعين العياده الخارجيه

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### الخلاصه:

### خلفية البحث:

الادمان الدوائي مشكله شائعته في جميع انحاء العالم بما فيهم دول الشرق الاوسط.في العراق حجم المشكله لم يعرف بسبب نقص الدراسات الوبائيه.ولكن هناك اتفاق بين الخبراء يفيد بان المشكله موجوده و تتفاقم.

اهداف البحث: لاستخراج معدل الادمان الدوائي بين مرضى المراجعين العياده الخارجيه في الوحده النفسيه.

الطرق: تم فحص جميع المرضى المراجعين مستشفى الحسين الوحده النفسيه خلال سته اشهر لتقصي حالات الادمان الدوائي لديهم.بالنسبه للمدمنين تم الطلب منهم ملاء استبيان الادمان.

النتائج: ١١% من المرضى المراجعين كانوا يعانون من الادمان.جميعهم كانوا ذكور.الادمان الكحولي و التبغ (التدخين) كان الاعلى بين المدمنين ٧١% منهم كان يستخدم الحقن و الحبوب الدوائيه.الامراض النفسيه المتزامنه مع الادمان كانت نسبتها ١٠٠% لدى المرضى المراجعين.

الاستنتاج: الادمان الدوائي مشكله مهمه وشائعته بين المرضى المراجعين للوحده النفسيه.

## Prevalence of drug addiction among psychiatric out patients

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### Abstract

**Background :** Drug addiction is a common problem all over the world including countries in the Middle East. In Iraq, the size of this problem is not known due to the lack of epidemiological studies but there is consensus among experts that the problem is there and that it is growing.

**Aim of study:** To find the prevalence of drug dependence among psychiatric out patients.

**Patients and methods :** All psychiatric inpatients in the psychiatric unit of Nassiriya General Hospital during a period of 6 months were interviewed about the presence of drug dependence, those who were found to be drug dependent were asked to fill 'a questionnaire and were further interviewed. Some data were taken from the case records of patients.

**Results :** 11% of inpatients were drug addicts, all were males. Abuse of alcohol and tobacco smoking were high among drug dependants, 71% were using injectable drugs. Comorbidity with other psychiatric disorders was 100%.

**conclusion:** Drug addiction was recognized among psychiatric out patients, most cases were not reported to the treating doctors, which further complicates the picture about the size of the problem of drug dependence

## **Introduction**

Drug abuse implies the use of drugs outside social, medical, or legal norm, [1]. Drug dependence is defined as a syndrome in which someone continues to take the drug because of the reinforcing effect which is derived from it. This behavior occurs despite the adverse social or medical consequences which may have; the dependent person is motivated to continue taking the drug

for his/her continued well-being. Often the dose of the drug must be increased to maintain its desired effect [2].

Harmful effects of drug dependence include medical, psychological, and social effect. Medical complications may be fatal; include infections (abscesses, phlebitis, septicemia, hepatitis, endocarditis, pneumonia, and HIV) and arterial occlusions leading to gangrene of limbs. Drug misuse in pregnancy may be teratogenic [2].

Psychological complications include acute intoxication, substance-induced psychotic disorder, Cognitive impairment syndromes, and exacerbation of pre-existing disorder. Social complication includes loss of productivity and self-care disability [3].

A report from United Nations International Drug Control Program (UNDCP) shows that 3.37% of world population is drug dependents, 50% of them are less than 20 years old [4]. In Ghana only 12.67% of drug dependents are above 40 years old, 45.97% didn't completed secondary school. In middle east, about 19.6% of psychiatric patients are cannabis dependents, 52.7 % of drug dependents have schizophrenia and psychotic disorder [6]. 30.23% of Iranian high school students reported usage of substance(s) once or more during their lives, and 13.26% of the students were currently using substance(s) [7], more than 90% of them are male and more than 50% are married, 80% employed, 20-25% are intravenous drug users [8]. While only 1.9% of Turkish people are drug addiction [9], 96% are male; they are around 20-35 years old. 65% of marijuana dependents are smokers, those who have drunk alcohol and smoked cigarettes are 30 times more likely to have smoked marijuana than the others [11]. Other neighboring countries; Syrian Arab Republic 2.0%, and Jordan 2.1% are drug dependents [9]. In Iraq, epidemiological data are lacking but anecdotal reports by psychiatrists and media implicate that this problem is growing. Our study is an attempt to throw light on some aspects of this problem. The aim of this paper is to determine the prevalence of drug addiction among psychiatric out patients.

### **Patients and Methods**

**1-setting and sample :** Inclusion criteria are admission to psychiatric ward of General Hospital in Nassiriya. We took information directly from patients by using a questionnaire and we gathered information from case sheets of patients. Oral consent was taken from patients or their relatives. The sample was 64 patients who represented the total number of patients visiting psychiatric unit from 19th of July, 2008 to 19th of September, 2009.

**2-Procedure :** 64 patients (34 males, 30 females) were interviewed about the problem of drug dependence according to a semi-structured interview based on DSM-IV-TR. Those who were found to be drug dependents were asked to fill a questionnaire, containing questions about socio-demographic and some clinical characteristics of those patients. Other information was taken from case sheets of patients and then the data were analyzed.

## Results

Seven (11%) male patients were drug dependants among the total inpatient population. The age range in 4 patients (51%) was between 31 to 40 years, and between 21-30 years in the remaining 3 patients. 4 patients (57%) were married, 2(28%) were single and one (14%) was divorced. All the 7 patients were smokers, and 5 of them were alcoholic. The distribution of drug dependant patients according to Educational level showed that 3 patients(43%) were uneducated, 3 were graduated from secondary schools and one graduated from an institution. Three patients (43%) were policemen, 2 patients were employed and the other 2 were unemployed. It was found that 5 patients (71%) had been living and working in Iran for more than a year and one patient (14%) for less than a year. Table (1) shows the diagnoses of all inpatients according to case records. Table (2) shows the distribution of drug dependants according to the route of use of the drug. Table (3): Co-morbidity between of drug dependence and other psychiatric disorders according to our questionnaire and interview.

Disorders	No.	%
Schizophrenia	30	45%
Major Depressive disorder	11	16.5%
Bipolar disorder	6	9%
Acute Mania	4	6%
Epilepsy	3	4.5%
Conversion disorder	2	3%
Alcoholic disorder	1	1.5%
Drug dependence	1	1.5%
OCD	1	1.5%
Mental retardation+Schizophrenia	2	3%
Epilepsy+bipolar disorder	1	1.5%
Schizophrenia+OCD	1	1.5%
Alcoholic dependence+panic attack		1.5%

Table(1): The diagnoses of all out patients according to clinical interview

Route of use	No.	%
Oral	1	14%
Smoking	1	14%
Oral+injectable	4	57%
Inhalation+Oral+injection	1	14%

**Table(2): The distribution of drug addiction according to the route of use of drug**

Diagnosis	No	%	Table(3): comorbidity between drug addiction and other psychiatric Disorder according to our questionnaire and interview
Schizophrenia	3	42%	
Epilepsy	1	14%	
Alcoholic	1	14%	
Alcoholic+panic attack+ Personality disorder+ Schizophrenia	1 1	14% 14%	

ction and other psychiatric  
Disorder according to our questionnaire and interview

## **Discussion**

The percentage of patients dependent on drugs was significant among psychiatric inpatients. The interesting finding is that only 14% had reported the problem to their doctors which gives an impression that either they intended to hide their problem due to stigma and or legal issues, or they were not well interviewed. The majority of patients were males which may reflect the cultural trend in the region of Middle East as there are similar results in other countries of the region [9, 11]. All patients were below 40 years of age reflecting the high prevalence of drug dependence among young people which seems to be a universal finding in most studies [5,9,11]. This finding is specially important as the main population in the Iraqi community is young [12]. 43% of the patients were policemen which is surprising as policemen are supposed to participate in the protection of the society from this problem and not being indulged in it. Anyhow this finding can be explained by the easier access of policemen to these substances and by the stressful nature of their job. Most patients were either uneducated or having low level of education, this may agree with some studies [5]. but may differ with others, for example in Iran a significant proportion of drug dependants are college students or graduates [7]. There was a high association between drug abuse, tobacco smoking, and alcohol abuse. Moreover, most patients were using more than one drug. This may be similar to what was found in other studies over the world [11]. This implies more hazards on the general health of drug dependants [2,3] and may reflect the tendency for multiple drug abuse [2,5]. The high prevalence of injectable drugs among our sample seems strange as the use of heroin and other injectable drugs is rare among Iraqi abusers according to experts. This finding should be taken seriously as the hazards of sharing injections are tremendous like transmission of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis [2]. All patients were admitted for reasons other than drug dependence. Which reflects the high co-morbidity between drug abuse and other psychiatric disorders [3, 6]. But this finding may imply that part of this problem may be iatrogenic. Anyhow the small size of the sample may not help to form a firm conclusion.

In spite of the short duration and small sample, this study provided important information that should be considered in future studies and in planning for prevention and treatment of drug addiction.

### **Conclusion :**

Drug dependence was recognized among psychiatric inpatients, most cases were not reported to the treating doctors, which further complicate the picture about the size of the problem of the drug dependence in Iraq.

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