

Editorial

Prevalence of Depression Symptoms among Internal Displaced People in Iraq: A Pilot Study

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Iraq and Iraqi population were exposed to wars, sanction and violence during previous decades [1-4], the general conditions deteriorated after June 2014 in which Millions of people were displaced and settled in refugees [5]. Researches show that the exposure to violence is associated with a range of mental disorders such as depression and posttraumatic stress disorder [2,6]. The aim of our work is to estimate the prevalence of depression symptoms among internal displaced people in Iraq.

A cross sectional study was carried during January 2016 and about forty eight subjects of internal displaced who settle in refugee in Abu Graib region – in west of Baghdad- were chosen by a convenient method. Each participant filled a questionnaire consisted from demographical questions and the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CESD) [7] for assessment the depression symptoms, in addition a question for thoughts that would be better off dead, or of hurting themselves in some way [8] was added (item 9 of Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9))

Respondents age ranged from 21 to 46 years with a mean of 29.5+ 5.3 years, 45 % of them have university degree as highest level of education.

The results revealed that 27.1% had feeling of depression for 3-4 days per week, 18.8% had feeling for depression for most days of the week, while 74% of the subjects depressed according to the score of the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CESD).

17.7% had thoughts that would be better off dead, or of hurting themselves in some way. The finding reveals higher prevalence of depression symptoms and higher thoughts of death compared to other studies [5,9], which might be due to several factors as severity and long time of violence exposure, lack of social support and poor mental health services for internal displaced people, which may aggravated their dire conditions. Further national wide study for demonstrating the suffering of internal displaced people.

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