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PREVALENCE OF PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS IN PRISONERS OF KERMAN CITY IN 2013

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Evaluation of the mental condition of prisoners is of paramount importance and monitoring their mental health is vital. The objective of the current study was assessing the prevalence of psychiatric disorders in the inmates of the prisons of Kerman City. Method: In this descriptive-analytic-cross-sectional study, the totality of inmates of the prisons of Kerman City, who were sentenced to more than 4 months jail term and have passed at least one month of the term in prison in 2013 were introduced into the research with a sample size of 228 subjects among whom 114 were women and the other 114 were men. The data were analyzed by SPSS and Chi-squared test. All in all, 50 % of subjects were male. The more popular age of prevalence was between 18-28 with 44.7 % for women and 62.3 % for the men. As to the educational status of the subjects the most frequent educational degree was under-diploma with 72.8 %. According to the mental condition and comparison of the acquired statistics of the data in the groups of women and men, there was a crisis as to the mental disorders and 87.3 % of women and 83.3 % of men were mentally ill in the time of committing crime. Conclusion: The most prevalent disorder among the whole prisoners was advanced depression and many of the prisoners suffered from one of the fundamental personality disorders.

Keywords: *Psychiatric Disorders, Prison, Kerman City, 2013.*

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation of the mental conditions in prisoners is of vital importance and there is an urgent need for the assessment of their mental health. The problems of criminals and prisoners particularly in relation to their psychiatric disorders are still one of the most challenging research fields. Personality disorders are classified in three branches of A (strange/abnormal) including paranoid, schizoid, and schizotypic, B (Histrionic, HPD and erratic) including narcissism, paranoid, borderline and antisocial, C (distressed/ anxious) including avoidant, dependent and obsessiv-compulsive as well as the depressed personality (Association, 2013). In Iran according to the recent published statistics, there are some 163000 prisoners in Iranian penitentiaries (Walmsley, 2003; Noorbala et al., 2004). Now more than 8.75 million prisoners are kept in the correctional facilities around the globe. United States of America with more than of 1.96 million, China with 1.42 million and Russia with 0.96 million inmates have the highest records of prisoners in the world (Senior et al., 2013; Fazel and Seewald, 2012). As it has been seen in various societies, the study of the mental health conditions and personality disorders of the prisoners as one of the social groups exposed to serious threats is of paramount importance. According to the results acquired in 2002 out of every 7 prisoners one prisoner is suffering from mental disorders or MDD. Moreover, half of the male prisoners and one fifth of the female prisoners are suffering from personality disorders (Fazel and Danesh, 2002) and this rate is high as compared to the total population. Based on the conducted studies only few of the published

researches in the country have been devoted to the detailed assessment of the status of the mental disorders among the prisoners. According to the findings of the current study, 55.2 % of the subjects were suffering in some way from a type of personality disorder and antisocial personality has been the most frequent disorder among the subjects (18.2) (12%). Other studies have also mentioned the prevalence of the psychological disorders in the prisoners as compared to the public (Steadman et al., 2009; Prins et al., 2014; Binswanger et al., 2010). The statistics mentioned in this regard are different (varying from 11 percent to 64 percent). In most prisoners there are antisocial personality disorders, paranoid and borderline personalities (Binswanger et al., 2010; Teplin et al., 1990; Vicens et al., 2011; Young et al., 2015). In our country few studies have been conducted in the field of the prevalence of the psychiatric disorders in prisoners (Noorbala et al., 2014; Fazel and Seewald, 2012; Assadi et al., 2006). In the study conducted by Bolhari et al., 87.5 % of 1201 prisoners selected from 7 different penitentiaries in 5 provinces across the country have been diagnosed as suspicious of mental disorder (Bolhari et al., 2003). In the study of Ashkani et al., 75.1 % of subjects were diagnosed with mental disorders (Ashkani, Dehbozorghi and Shoja, 2002). According to the study of Shariat et al., who have reported the psychiatric disorders in 351 of prisoners, the most popular disorders observed among the prisoners are mood disorders with 13.7 percent and adjustment disorders with 12.6 percent (Shariat et al., 2006). This study has been conducted with the goal of evaluation of the mental disorders among the prisoners of the central penitentiary of Kerman City based on the application of clinical interview for comparing with the results of the few studies that have been conducted in the country as a basis for future studies.



METHODOLOGY

The present research was a cross-sectional descriptive-analytic study. The statistical population included the totality of inmates of the central prison of Kerman City in May 2013 to November 2013 and the sample size comprised of 228 subjects who have been included in the study if they had more than 4 months jail term and passed one months there. The subjects have been selected using the simple sampling method (available samples). Those subjects in whom the drug abuse preceded the abnormal personality conducts and there was no possibility of distinguishing between the primary personality disorder. Moreover, the secondary behavioral misconducts were eliminated from the study. In addition, the subjects' refusal of participation in the study caused them to be excluded from the study. Overall, the response rate in prisoners was 90 %. During the period under study (4 months) some 1100 prisoners were kept in the centry. It needs to be mentioned that the classification of the inmates in certain divisions are majorly based on the type of their crime as well as the military, juvenile and female divisions. Given the existing restrictions the security related prisoners were not studied. After receiving the permission from the ethics committee of the research deputy of Kerman University and Kerman Organization of the Penitentiaries in the field of project execution by referring to the subjects and explanation of the objective of the study and receiving the verbal consent from them for their participation in the study and following the confirmation of ethics committee and receiving the consent letter, the clinical interview of diagnosis of the type of mental disorder was evaluated by 8 residents of psychiatry trained at Kerman University of Medical Sciences. Demographic information of subjects (samples) was gathered by independent questionnaire. The analysis of the gathered data

was done after insertion into the computer using SPSS and absolute and relative frequency distribution was determined and the Chi-squared test was used for data analysis.

RESULTS

Overall, 228 subjects were studied, 50 % of whom were male. Most popular age was between 18-28 with 44.7 % for women and 62.3 % for men. 50 % of the subjects were married. The complementary information about the demographic features of the studied samples has been presented in the table 1. The overall prevalence of mental disorders among the subjects were 87.3 % and according to the comparisons made by the data in the groups of women and men in view of the type of mental disorder, 52.6 % of men and 77.1 % of women were suffering from MMD and from this perspective both groups were of the same orientation. The second most popular mental disorder among the male inmates was dependent personality with 14.9 % while the borderline personality disorder with 25.4 % held the second rank of popularity in female prisoners and the dependent personality was of 22.8 % of prevalence. Borderline personality with the statistical percentage difference with dependent personality with 14.9 % stood in the third rank. Frequency percentage of other disorders among all inmates has been shown in the table 2. There was no meaningful relationship between the prevalence rate of psychiatric disorders and the marriage status and gender ($P > 0/05$). Furthermore, there was a meaningful relationship between the prevalence rate of mental disorders and the age of prisoners in the sense that 58.6 % of the prisoners were 28 years old and 71.7 % were of 28-38 years old ($P = 0/02$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the results acquired in this study, 87.3 % of the studied subjects had one of different types of personality disorders and this percentage was higher than other studies which have been conducted in our country about personality disorders suggesting this prevalence to be 55.2 % (Palahang, Vakilzadeh and Deris, 2003). Moreover, the number acquired in this study was fundamentally different from most of the studies which have been conducted outside Iran suggesting a number between 11-64 % for the prevalence of the mental disorders among the jail inmates (Butler et al., 2006; O'Brien et al., 2003; Hassiotis et al., 2011). In the current study, we have reached the conclusion that most of the disorders were related to MMD, obsessive personality, borderline personality, dependent personality and antisocial personality. In other studies the majority of the prisoners suffered from antisocial, borderline, paranoid, sadistic, pessimist and narcissist personality disorders. These disorders can be seen in most of the inmates, but more popular disorders are MMD, antisocial personality, borderline and paranoid. In current study, the highest rate was for the MMD (64.9 %) and borderline disorder (20.1%) and this conclusion was not completely in line with the results of the study conducted in Shar-e Kord, because in their studies the antisocial personality disorder and borderline personality were more popular (Palahang, Vakilzadeh and Deris, 2003). It needs to be mentioned that in the study conducted in Shar-e Kord, like the present study, the clinical interview method has been used for asking certain questions related to the disorders from the jail inmates and their differences can be traced back to the difference of these personality disorders in various populations. In a study conducted by Dr. Ashkani et al. at Shiraz penitentiaries it has been shown that 75.1 % of the inmates have had one type of personality disorder. Borderline and paranoid personality



disorders were of highest statistical frequency (Ashkani, Dehbozorgi and Shoja, 2002). These findings were in line with this study's findings and the geographical vicinity can be considered as the reason for this coorientation. Given the high percentage acquired for the personality disorders in this study, paying attention to a number of points is of importance. First point is related to the provision of the requirements for presence and execution of the psychological and psychotherapeutic trainings by the professors of the faculty of educational sciences and psychology to the staff of the prison's infirmary for review and acquaintance of/ with personality disorders and behaviors which may prove helpful while they are dealing with an inmate who is suffering from a specific personality disorder. Moreover, this will help the staff to screen the people suffering from these disorders. Now, there is no screening program for the identification of the prisoners suffering from psychological disorders and when these inmates enter the penitentiary, the basic examinations are done by the general physician on the inmates. Thus, a plan should be drawn for screening in the prison. Of course, this problem has been noted in other countries, too (Shariat, 2006). Then, it seems that more precise execution of the active screening program and the effort for application of screening means or provision of simpler screening means in the penitentiaries are required (Martin et al., 2013). Therefore, this issue needs to be taken into account by the task force of crime prevention so that individuals with personality disorders be closely examined. Moreover, given the frequency of mental disorder of MMD among the jail inmates, further studies concerning the evaluation of the effect of medical and educational programs in individual and collective stages for reducing the crime rate by prisoners suffering from mental disorders after leaving the prison can be taken into account as a suitable research field.

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