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# Prevalence Study of Psychiatric Disorders among Female Prisoners due to Violence Crimes

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** About 9 million people are imprisoned worldwide, but the number of mental disorders is unknown.

**Aim of the study:** Determination of the prevalence of psychiatric disorders among female prisoners of violent crimes inside one of the Egyptian prisons.

**Patient and Method:** The study was done on 134 female prisoners in Tanta General Prison, in a certain period “ Aug.2014 - Jun.2015”.

**Instruments and procedures:** First all the samples were examined with semi-structured interviews by the researcher and diagnosed according to DSM IV TR . Then the sample had three questionnaires, ( Ezyk – IQ – Family Economic Social Cultural Level). These data underwent statistical analysis, and then the researcher described them in tables to correlate between the socio-demographic, clinical variables, and questionnaires of the study.

**Results:** The results of the semi-structured interview had revealed that the majority of the sample were suffering from psychiatric disorders with percentage represented (61.9%). The most common disorders were substance abuse (35.07%), histrionic personality disorder (24.6%), major depressive disorder (17.9%), and borderline personality disorder (15.6%). The results of Ezyk represented that psychotic personality has been found among female violent prisoners. The results of IQ represented a marked decrease among the majority of the sample. The results of the Family Economic Social Cultural Level Questionnaire represented a marked decrease among the majority of the sample.

**Conclusion:** The psychiatric disorders are markedly increased among the female prisoners who were imprisoned due to violent crimes.

**Keywords:** Study, Psychiatric Disorders, Female Prisoners, Violence Crimes

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## INTRODUCTION

About 9 million people are imprisoned worldwide, but the number of mental disorders is unknown. Several studies of prisoners on 12 countries reported that the prevalence of psychotic illnesses between men was 3.7% and between women was 4.0%, prevalence of depression between men was 10% and between women was 12%, and prevalence of personality disorders between men was 65% and between women 42% <sup>1</sup>.

In a study of the psychological and sociological profiles of 95 female offenders in Mansoura General Prison, the prevalence of depression was 25.26%, prevalence of anxiety was 9.38%, and prevalence of personality disorders was 55.79% <sup>2</sup>.

Crime is considered a violent phenomenon in all its phases, so, it was a superstition that it is more likely

suitable for males, who can afford and perform it better than females in both quality and quantity <sup>3</sup>.

Forensic psychiatry is the science that investigates the relationships between psychiatry and medicine, so it gets down to crimes and its phases according to the psychological aspect. Although the psychiatric patients represent the minor percentage between offenders, they cause a lot of difficulties for psychiatry and law due to the relationship between psychiatric disorders and crimes which affects judgment <sup>4</sup>.

Researchers should exert more effort to study the factors of committing crimes because there are a lot of difficulties that face them during researches as the missed recorded crimes ( family crimes ) <sup>5</sup>.

The studies which concern with antisocial behavior shows significant differences according to quantity and quality between males and females so that the forensic psychiatry decided the possibility of differences in causes and methods of crimes between genders <sup>6</sup>.

The forensic psychiatry studied the prevalence of crimes and its relationships to psychiatric disorders, explaining that the psychiatric disorders are not the main cause of crimes even if the offender was a psychiatric patient <sup>7</sup>.

The substance abuse had a great relationship to different crimes because alcohol and drugs play a great role in the elevating the prevalence of crimes, the study of offenders due to violent crimes in Sweden showed that 16% of them had a past history of addiction <sup>8</sup>.

Although the varieties between psychiatric disorders and crimes, violent crimes have a great relationship to personality disorders especially antisocial personality disorder, paranoid schizophrenia, and substance abuse <sup>9</sup>.

**Objectives** This study aimed to determine the prevalence of psychiatric disorders among female

prisoners of violent crimes inside one of the Egyptian prisons.

### PATIENT AND METHODS

The study was done in Tanta General Prison, in a certain period "from Aug.2014 till Jan.2015". The sample size of the study was 134 female prisoners who were imprisoned due to violent crimes. All the samples of the study are Egyptians, healthy, and stayed more than a year in prison.

**Instruments and procedures:** First all the samples were examined with a semi-structured interview by the researcher and diagnosed according to DSM IV TR .

Then the sample had three questionnaires, (Eysenck – IQ – Family Economic Social Cultural Level ).

These data underwent statistical analysis, and then the researcher described them in tables to correlate between the socio-demographic, clinical variables, and questionnaires of the study.

### RESULTS

The results of the study revealed that (61.9%) represented with psychiatric disorders.

Diagnosis	no.	%
Substance abuse	47	35.07
Histrionic personality disorder	33	24.6
Major depressive disorder	24	17.9
Borderline personality disorder	21	15.6
Antisocial personality disorder	15	11.1
Generalized anxiety disorder	13	9.7
Sleep disorder	10	7.4
Borderline disorder	9	6.7
panic	8	5.9
Social phobia	8	5.9
Obsessive compulsive disorder	7	5.2
Schizophrenia	4	2.9
<b>Total no.</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>%100</b>

Table 1: Psychiatric disorders according to DSM5.

The most common disorders were substance abuse (35.07%), histrionic personality disorder (24.6%), major depressive disorder (17.9%), and borderline personality disorder (15.6%). The Dual diagnosis represents the majority of the sample. The percentage of psychiatric disorders were markedly elevated among the age group (30-39) year old.

Personalities	No.	%
Introversion	45	33.5
Psychoticism	134	100
Neuroticism	97	72.3
Lie-social desirability	15	11.2
Criminal aptitude	134	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2:

Eysenck personality questionnaire.

According to the results of Eysenck, the psychotic personality represents all the sample of female violent prisoners

scale	No.	%
extremely low(58-68)	89	71.4
Dull(69-80)	37	16.9
Average(81-115)	8	5.9
Superior(116-125)	0	0
<b>total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>%100</b>

Table 3: IQ.

The results of IQ represents a marked decrease among the majority of the sample.

	No.	%
<b>Low(580115)</b>	89	<b>66.4</b>
Average(116-173)	45	33.6
High(174-230)	0	0
<b>%100</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>%100</b>

Table 4: Family Economic Social Cultural Level.

The results of the Family Economic Social Cultural Level Questionnaire represents a marked decrease among the majority of the sample.

## DISCUSSION

The study was done on a sample of females who were imprisoned due to violent crimes, so it is a cohort study

that its results can't be compared with the results of general population studies.

The sample was 134 female prisoners who were poisoned in Tanta general prison.

Most samples are in the age group(30-39) (median=30.9, SD=2.7), this could be due to the high

rates of stressors that face people in this age group which is the productive period of life <sup>10</sup>.

Married represents 55.2%, and this could be due to the marital pressures which may push them towards crimes <sup>2</sup>.

Intermediate - educated represents the majority of the sample 54.6%, and this could be due to their failure to control emotions and aggression by thinking <sup>10</sup>.

The psychiatric disorders among female prisoners in violent crimes represent 61.9%, so, it is very high rates compared with the general population <sup>11</sup>.

As regards the results of the study, the dual diagnosis represents the majority of sample <sup>12</sup>. The substance abuse disorder represents 35.07% <sup>13</sup>, major depressive disorder 17.9% <sup>14</sup> and schizophrenia 2.9% <sup>1</sup>.

According to murders, substance abuse represents 51.3%, followed by major depressive disorder 40.5%, then borderline personality disorder 35.1%, antisocial personality disorder and bipolar 24.3%.<sup>9</sup>

50% of forced robbing offenders suffered from generalized anxiety disorder and histrionic personality disorder, while substance abuse represented 44.4%, panic 22.2%, antisocial personality disorder 16.7%, sleep disorder, and OCD 11.1%.

71.4% of the sample has an extremely low IQ level followed by dull zone 16.9%, which explains the shortage of thinking and judgment <sup>15</sup>.

Finally, the majority of the sample represented by low levels on the Family Economic Social Cultural questionnaire 66.4%, followed by the average level of 33.6%, with no high levels at all <sup>10</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

The study represents the high rates of psychiatric disorders among female offenders due to violent crimes, so the study recommends psychological and sociological studies of the causes of crimes and supports the role of psychiatrists, psychologists in prisons, especially females prisons, and increasing their numbers.

The study also recommends the aim to promote strategies for the care and rehabilitation of inmates and trying to improve the economic, social, and cultural levels of families by specific programs.

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