

Communication

# Epilepsy and Mental Health (Descriptive-Analytical Study)

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**Abstract: Introduction:** Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological diseases. Epilepsy poses a significant burden on the quality of life of affected individuals and their families. The aim of this study was to determine the psychiatric disorders in epileptic patients. **Methods and Materials:** This descriptive-analytical study was conducted in 2017 with a simple random sampling method on patients with epilepsy who admitted to the neurology department. **Results:** Among the 150 examined patients, 88 (58.7%) were female and 63(42%) had epilepsy more than 10 years. The most common psychiatric disorder among epileptic patients was depression (68 patients = 45.3%) and anxiety (65 patients = 43.3%) patients. **Conclusion:** Most of patients had more than 10 years history of epilepsy. Also, Anxiety and depression were the most common symptoms in epileptic patients. It need to more study to determine the psychiatric disorders in epileptic patients.

**Keywords:** Epilepsy; Seizure; Psychiatry; Anxiety

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## 1. Introduction

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological diseases with an incidence of 0.5 to 2% in the general population that is caused by frequent produce of seizure impulses by the brain (1).

Psychiatric comorbidities in patients with epilepsy have key role on the clinical and therapeutic approach of these patients that affects different aspects of quality of life in epileptic patients (10). On the other hand, psychiatric comorbidities are often neglected in patients with epilepsy and are treated improperly and lead to poor quality of life (11). Studies in Iran also show the necessity of producing more and high quality papers on epilepsy and its related factors (9).

## 2. Materials and methods

This Descriptive-analytical study was performed in 2017 with a simple random sampling method. 150 patients with epilepsy admitted to the neurology department. The data collecting tools were a demographic checklist and SCL90 questionnaire. Checklist of demographic features includes age, sex, marital status, education, and duration of epilepsy. The SCL-90 test included 90 questions for evaluation of psychological symptoms that introduced by Derogatis, reviewed and evaluated after psychometric analyzes and clinical experiences and the final version have prepared.90 items of this test in 9 dimensions are included Somatization, Obsessive-Compulsive, Interpersonal Sensitivity, Hostility, Phobic Disorder, Paranoid Ideation, Psychoticism, Depression and Anxiety. Grading and analyzing this test based on 3 general indicators Global Severity Index, Positive Symptom Distress Index and Positive Symptom Total (12).

## 3. Results

In present study, 150 patients with epilepsy were studied that their demographic characteristics presented in Table 1. The following table shows that 88 cases (58.7%) were female and 104 cases (69.39%) of the participants were married. Also, 75 cases (50%) were

between the ages of 26-44 and 66 cases (44%) had a mid-school diploma or higher. In addition, most of the samples (42%) were suffering from epilepsy for more than 10 years.

The most common psychiatric disorder among patients with epilepsy related to depression with 68 cases (45.3%) and anxiety with 65 cases (43.3%) and the lowest prevalence was related to paranoid ideation and Psychoticism .

According to Table 3, there was a significant relationship between age with somatization and phobias disturbances ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the present study, in patients with epilepsy, somatization and phobic disorders significantly increased with increasing age. But there was no significant relationship between other comorbidities and age.

There was no significant relationship between psychiatric disorders and gender in patients with epilepsy (table 4). According to Table 5, there was no significant relationship between psychiatric disorders among patients with epilepsy with duration of disease.

#### 4. Discussion

the results showed that the most commonly reported comorbidities were anxiety and depression (43.4% and 45.3% respectively), and the lowest incidence was related to psychotic disorders. Regarding to our study, Mensah et al. and Rai et al. studies concluded that prevalence of depression were 11.2% and 9.6% respectively, (10, 13) which was in line with our study. In Ertekin et al. study, between three groups including 29 patients with temporal lobe epilepsy, 27 patients with generalized idiopathic epilepsy and 30 patients in the control group. The results showed that major depressive disorder with 17.2% after obsessive compulsive disorder was the most common disorder temporal lobe epilepsy group and was the most common disorder with 22.2% in with generalized idiopathic epilepsy group, which is in line with this study. In our study, in temporal lobe epilepsy group, obsessive-compulsive disorder was the most common comorbidity, which was in contrast with the results of this study.

In Mensah et al. study, showed that the duration of epilepsy in both MDD and non-MDD groups was 15 and 19 years, respectively, which was not significant(10). That had inconsistent with the results of this study. One of the limitations of present study is the problem of collecting complete information from the samples due to lack of cooperation between the patients. In addition, the present study is a descriptive-cross-sectional study with limited sample size that reduces the level of generalizability to other populations.

#### 5. Conclusion

The results of this study showed a significant difference between age with somatic and phobias in patients with epilepsy also that depression and anxiety were the most common comorbidities in epileptic patients. In addition, gender and duration of epilepsy was not statistically significant with psychiatric comorbidities in epileptic patients.

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