
PSYCHIATRIC COMORBIDITY AMONG INDIVIDUALS WITH SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCE AT A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL IN PAKISTAN

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Background: Studies have shown higher rate of various psychiatric disorders among individuals with substance abuse / dependence. There is little data in developing countries, such as Pakistan, on prevalence of psychiatric co-morbidity in this population and impact on treatment.

Objective: To assess the psychiatric co-morbidity among individuals with substance dependence and to determine its demographic associations in patients with substance dependence in Pakistan.

Method: This was a descriptive study conducted at a tertiary care hospital in Pakistan. Participants were 588 individuals with substance dependence admitted to a tertiary care hospital in Pakistan, mainly in male inpatient substance dependence unit. The patients were assessed for psychiatric co-morbidity using DSM IV criteria. Informed consent was obtained. The study was approved by the Institutional Research Committee. The results were obtained by using chi square test on SPSS 17.

Results: Out of 588, 200 patients (34 %) were found co-morbid with other psychiatric disorders along with substance dependence. Reason of first substance use and history of previous substance dependence were observed to be significantly associated with co-morbid psychiatric disorders, $\chi^2(48, n = 549) = 112.396, p < 0.01$ and $\chi^2(18, n = 588) = 29.66, p = 0.041$ respectively.

Conclusion:

1. There was high rate of psychiatric co-morbidity among individuals with substance dependence in this sample.
2. Depression, personality disorders and anxiety disorders were the major co-morbid diagnosis among this population.