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SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER (SAD) AMONG OUTPATIENTS ATTENDING A TERTIARY CARE PSYCHIATRIC SERVICE IN EASTERN NILE DELTA

M. Amr¹, M. El-Wasify², A.-H. El-Gilany²

¹King Faisal University, Al-Hassa, Saudi Arabia, ²Mansoura University, Mansoura, Egypt

Thirty patients suffering from generalized social anxiety disorder (SAD) and diagnosed according to DSM-IV criteria attending the psychiatric outpatient clinic of a University hospital in Egypt 2009-2010 were assessed by the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale to estimate the severity of symptoms. Anxiety and depressive symptoms were also assessed by Hamilton anxiety rating Scale and Montgomery-Asberg Depression Rating Scale (MADRS). The Global assessment of functioning was completed following the appointment. Forty-seven percent of the patients were males, and 53% were females. The mean age of the sample was 22.5 years, with a mean duration of SAD of 5.6 years. Forty percent of patients had a positive family history for SAD. Forty percent of patients presented with co-morbid depressive disorder, whereas 24 % presented with anxiety disorder and 31% with other disorders. The age of patients was found to correlate positively with total LSAS score, but it correlated negatively with the total depressive score. The severity of social anxiety symptoms was significantly greater in patients with co-morbid diagnoses and in depressive disorders than in anxiety disorders. High Correlations between MADRS and LSAS scores were observed in depressive disorders .

Limitations: Small size of convenience sample undergoing varying treatments within a single specialist tertiary referral centre. Early recognition and treatment of SAD, may ameliorate the occurrence of depression. Follow up studies are needed to investigate the risk factors that may lead to depression in SAD.