

## Feasibility and Efficacy of Matrix Model in Arabic Countries

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**Abstract :** Background: The matrix model (MM) is an evidence-based program for treating substance use disorders. Since first translated into Arabic in 2010, the MM has been gaining popularity in Arabic countries. However, there is no published data as pertains to its efficacy and feasibility in Arabic communities. Here we aimed at exploring providers' perspectives on its feasibility and efficacy. Methods: Eight addiction treatment centers from four Arabic countries, namely Egypt, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Iraq, were contacted via email. They were asked to fill in a 21-item questionnaire. Results: Matrix model continues to be utilized in 6 out of the 8 contacted programs. One center in Egypt has discontinued the MM as the providers felt it was not suitable for substance disorders other than stimulants, which are not common in Egypt. Baghdad University Medical Center has substituted MM with Colombo Program as there have been more training opportunities available for it. Data showed wide variability in regards to number of clients treated with the MM (from 300 to 2500). The Arabic version was utilized for training providers in 5 out of the 8 centers while the providers of the other 3 have been trained in the United States. All providers reported that MM made their job significantly easier, and seven providers believed that MM has favorably affected the relapse rate. In all of the six centers, MM is being utilized for many substance use disorders in addition to stimulant use disorders. Reported challenges included the acceptability of patients and their families, difficulty understanding some concepts, and high drop rates in some centers. Conclusion: Matrix model seems to be a valuable modality for the treatment of substance use disorders in Arabic countries. It has its own challenges and limitations that call for more culturally adapted versions.

**Keywords :** addiction, Arabic countries, developing countries, matrix model

**Conference Title :** ICPCP 2020 : International Conference on Psychiatry and Cognitive Psychotherapy

**Conference Location :** Dublin, Ireland

**Conference Dates :** March 19-20, 2020