

Forced Displacement and Mental Health Problems in Refugees Residing in Quetta for Decades

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Abstract : Objective: To study the prevalence of common Mental health disorders among forcibly displaced people and to compare with the common mental health disorders among host community members. Study design: Analytical Study. Place of study: Balochistan institute of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, Quetta, Baluchistan, Pakistan. Methodology: Data from the Outpatient department were analyzed to numerate both the host community and refugees. Out of 4120, 354 refugee patients were identified using their proof registration (POR) card and for 3776 of the host community using their computerized national identity card (CNIC), data was analyzed for the prevalence of mental health disorders among them. Results: This study states that Afghan Refugees presented to OPD services of Balochistan institute of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, 47% were diagnosed as Major depressive disorder with/without psychosis, 19% with Generalized anxiety disorder, 5% were diagnosed as Bipolar Affective disorder, 5% With schizophrenia, 4% as Post-traumatic stress disorder, 3% as migraine, 3% conversion disorder, 2% Obsessive-compulsive disorder, 1% somatoform disorder and 10% of them presented with other psychiatric disorders, while in host community 21% were diagnosed as Major depressive disorder with/without psychosis, 24% as Generalized anxiety disorder, 12% as somatoform disorder, 10% as Obsessive-compulsive disorder, 8% as migraine, 7% as conversion disorder, 4% as Bipolar Affective disorder, 3% as schizophrenia, 3% as Mental and behavioral disorder due to substance misuse and rest of 7% presented with other psychiatric disorders. Conclusion: The conclusion of this study states that mental health disorders are more common among refugees than in other populations. The result of this study shows that there is a big difference in the prevalence of mental health disorders among displaced people and the rest of the population. Some Mental health disorders are present in a higher percentage among displaced people rather than among the host community, while some other disorders are present in a lower percentage among displaced people rather than among the host community. This study also highlights that further studies are needed to determine risk and protective factors within the host community.

Keywords : forced displacement, mental health, Afghan refugees, depression

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