

International Conference on

# Clinical Psychology & Nursing

October 18-20, 2018 | Amsterdam, Netherlands

## Prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on war veterans in Sudanese armed forces aged (25-40) years, Khartoum, 2018



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This research paper was conducted to review the prevalence of PTSD, its association with age, education, socioeconomic status, marital status and origin of patients who were war veterans in Sudanese armed forces, were diagnosed with PTSD by a consultant psychiatrist, hospitalized in Khartoum based psychiatric hospital and aged between 25-40 years. The importance of this study lies in emphasizing a negative impact of war that is rarely focused on its social and economic disruptive effects on society and the burden that is not well anticipated by the state. The main purpose was to share results with main stakeholders for a better policy making strategy that puts mental health in a priority consideration. PTSD being a mental health disorder has a major effect on the productivity and ability of the sufferer to maintain normal day to day activities. Mental health disorders are associated with increased health care costs as well as productivity losses in the form of absenteeism, short term disability absences and reduced on the job productivity known as presenteeism. The human and economic toll is enormous yet often hidden. "Untreated mental illnesses in the US cost more than \$100 billion a year in lost productivity" - According to the

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). The data collection procedure was through a questionnaire that contained in the first section: personal information including age, gender, marital status and children under one's care. It also included military service time and combat exposure duration in addition to education level and socioeconomic status. In this first section, the aim was to determine the relationship between PTSD and combat exposure duration and susceptibility with education level and socioeconomic status and to assess the economic burden for those who are the main providers for their families and children and to link the lack of productivity caused by the disorder with the sufferer's age. The next section regarded any past medical or family history of mental illness, expression and duration of symptoms, the triggering event and the diagnosis of PTSD according to the Diagnosis and Statistical Manual-VI (DSM-VI). The data were collected from several psychiatric hospitals around Khartoum. The results of data analysis and interpretation showed that 83% of patients were under the age of 35 years while 80% received an education level only up to primary school, 85% were from a low socio-economic status, only 7% were married and have children and the majorities were originally from areas of conflict. Percentage of 70 suffered from chronic PTSD (symptoms lasting for more than 6 months) and 95% of the triggering events were direct physical trauma. From this study, we can conclude that PTSD has a direct association with low socio-economic status, low level of education and mainly affects younger war veterans with a greater chance of developing chronic PTSD due to the lack of appropriate mental health care and preventative measurements.

### Biography

Onab Ali Sulfab has completed her MBBS and Post-graduate Diploma in Peace and Development Studies. She is currently doing her MA in Peace and Development Studies. She is a Social Activist aspiring to specialize in the field of Social Psychiatry and Behavioral Studies.

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