

P01-164

A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS ABOUT THE PREVALENCE OF PTSD AFTER THE CHEMICAL ATTACK IN HALABJA

F. M-Hasan

Regional Psychiatry, Clinic for Traumatized Refugees, Holstebro, Denmark

The March 1988 genocide in Halabja, in which 4000-7000 Kurdish women, children and men were killed by the then Iraqi regime, was the most brutal gas attack on a civil population in modern history. This study challenges currently held understandings of PTSD and how traumatic transformations are expressed in other parts of the world; thereby contributing to the new field of traumatology. The study is quantitative analysis of the prevalence of PTSD, measured using (IES), in two Kurdish towns; Halabja and Suleimaniyah, encompassing 110 participants. The study's primary aim was to compare the prevalence of PTSD in Halabja with that in Suleimaniyah which was not attacked, the expectation being that PTSD would be more prevalent in Halabja than in Suleimaniyah. secondly, that women and those with shorter education would report a higher prevalence of PTSD symptoms, and thirdly that participants with higher levels of social support would report a lower prevalence of PTSD symptoms. The results showed that the prevalence of PTSD symptoms in total, of reliving and of hyperarousal in the trauma exposed town was significantly higher than in Suleimaniyah , thus supporting the primary hypothesis. The results further showed a significant connection between sex and PTSD symptoms and a clear linear relation between education and prevalence of PTSD symptoms, thus supporting the second hypothesis. However, the results showed no support for the third hypothesis. The study thus indicates that researchers and practitioners working with PTSD need a broader cultural understanding to carry out studies in best possible manner.