

Psychiatric Morbidity in Bomb Blast Victims: Results from a Developing Country

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Introduction: Psychosocial care is a much neglected area in trauma management, especially for blast victims. The aim of this study was to study the need for psychiatric evaluation of bomb blast victims treated at the Level-1 Apex Trauma Center.

Methods: Formal psychiatric consultations were conducted for all admitted bomb blast victims in four different incidents occurring over a period of two and half years. The consultant psychiatrist assessed these patients individually.

Results: Fifty such blast victims were admitted during this period. The majority were males (68%) and were in the age range of 20–30 years. Overall, 38% had psychiatric morbidity, of which 14% had severe psychiatric illness requiring active psychiatric intervention.

Conclusions: In the comprehensive management of trauma victims, there is an urgent need for proper psychological assessment of such patients. They require a multi-specialty approach for the assessment and management including long term rehabilitation.

Keywords: bomb blast; psychiatric morbidity; psychosocial; trauma; victims

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Poster Presentations—Psychosocial Issues

(I91) Democracy, Trauma, and Psychological Distress

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During Afghanistan's 30 years of war, two million Afghans were killed, one million were disabled, and six million were displaced as refugees to other countries. For these refugees, depression leading to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was not due to the years of torture and abuse, but from poor social support, being forced to face an alien-like civilization, improper psychiatric analyses due to unawareness of cross-cultural issues, and deficient interpreters. At the time, it was clear that the refugees were treated inhumanely. The Afghans, including children, found that advocating for their family and community struggles were a way of life. They had had enough with the "fight for freedom", and as result, the Soviets were forced back home.

During this time, Modernizing Medical Careers (MMC)-Mobile Emergency Medical Centre was set up along with the endless support and friendship of other countries, most thankfully Norway. In the course of five years in the battlefields of Jalalabad, the MMC successfully saved 4,200 wounded victims.

Keywords: Afghanistan; post-traumatic stress disorder; psychosocial; trauma; war

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(I92) Mental Stress Management of Medical Staff in an International Medical Cooperation

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Introduction: Mental stress management of medical staff in an international medical cooperation (IMC) is important for effective activities.

Methods: The authors examined the mental stress of of IMC medical staff that was experienced throughout three activity periods. The activity periods included: (1) "Period A", from decision-to-participate to arrival in the field; (2) "Period B", from arrival in the field to before going back home; and (3) "Period C", after going back home to three months after going back home. Self-administered questionnaires were used to examine the type of mental care preferred by staff. Participants were 154 medical staff members who worked in a past IMC. The data of 89 medical staff members were analyzed. The period of data collection was between August 2007 and November 2008.

Results: The results clarified that 66 (74.1%) staff felt stress during Period A, 69 (77.5%) during Period B, and 47 (52.8%) during Period C. Main stress factors during Period A included "difficulty of gathering information", "schedule coordination", and "rapid environmental changes"; In Period B, "ambiguity of information", "unexpected circumstances", and "human relationship"; and in Period C, "lots of works after return to the hospital", "prepare the activities report", and "lack of taking vacation after IMC".

Conclusions: Stress levels and factors gradually changed during activity periods in IMC activities. It is important to establish effective mental stress management systems for the future success of IMCs.

Keywords: disaster health management; international medical cooperation; management; medical staff; mental stress

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(I93) Addressing Humanitarian Concerns: Suffering, Service, and Spirituality in the Disaster Setting

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Disasters are not isolated events that happen "to" people, but rather an intricate interplay of political, social, and environmental forces. Anthropology has been instrumental in developing this more complex understanding of disasters. Anthropology offers rigorous methods by which one can study other multifaceted phenomena of human experiences such as suffering, peace, spirituality, and consciousness.

These two areas are addressed in an ethnographic study of the Brahma Kumaris spiritual community in New York and Orissa, India using the qualitative methods of participant observation, discourse analysis, informal discussions, and unstructured interviews.

Data from 12 months of ethnographic research in 2007 and 2008 begin to address important questions such as how does a global spiritual organization find consistent meth-