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DEMOGRAPHIC AND CLINICAL FEATURES AND SUICIDALITY IN CONVERSION DISORDER PATIENTS IN TURKEY

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Aims: The incidence of DSM-IV conversion disorder in outpatients is 4.5-32 %, with childhood trauma being an important etiological factor. This study aims at investigating the symptom pattern, comorbidity, suicidal behavior in this patient group.

Method: Outpatients who were diagnosed as DSM-IV Conversion Disorder were included in the study except those with a neurological disorder, mental retardation, alcohol and substance abuse/ dependency, bipolar, schizophrenic and other psychotic disorders and tardive dyskinesia. The assessment instruments are Demographic and Clinical Questionnaire developed by the authors, Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ-28), ve Hamilton Anxiety and Depression Rating Scales (HARS-HDRS).

Results: 25 female outpatients' mean age 34.48 (SD ± 10,21). 76% were married, 24% had no formal education. 48% (n=12) were physically, 28% (n=7) were sexually abused. 36% (n=9) of the patients had attempted suicide at least once. There was no significant link between childhood trauma and suicide attempt. There was a significant relationship between pseudoepilepsy symptom and suicidal tendency (p: 0,021). Mean HDRS score was 7,88 (SD: 4,43), mean HARS score 13,56 (SD: 7,42). There was a significant relationship between HARS scores and suicide attempt (p:0,037). CTQ-28 subgroup mean scores were: emotional neglect 2,86 (SD:1,32), physical neglect 2,04 (SD:0,52), emotional abuse 2,25 (SD:1,26), physical abuse 1,98 (SD:1,56), overall 10,98 (SD:4,15).

Conclusion: Conversion disorder patients are a neglected group in health care system. Past traumatic experiences, comorbidity rate and suicidality have to be addressed in assessment and treatment for a better prognosis.