
GENDER DIFFERENCES IN DSM-5 VERSUS DSM-IV-TR PTSD PREVALENCE AND CRITERIA COMPARISON AMONG 450 SURVIVORS TO THE L'AQUILA EARTHQUAKE

C. Carmassi¹, P. Stratta², E. Calderani¹, B. Pocai¹, C. Manni¹, M. Menichini¹, C. Bertelloni¹, S. Gemignani¹, G. Massimetti¹, A. Rossi², L. Dell'Osso¹

¹Clinical and experimental medicine, Ospedale Santa Chiara, Pisa, Italy ; ²Experimental Medicine, University of L'Aquila, L'Aquila, Italy

Background. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has demonstrated gender-specific prevalence and expressions across the different DSM definitions, since its first introduction in DSM-III. The DSM-5 recently introduced important revisions to PTSD symptomatological criteria. Aim of the present study is to explore whether gender moderates rates of DSM-5 PTSD expression in a non-clinical sample of survivors to a massive earthquake in Italy.

Methods. A sample of 450 survivors of the L'Aquila 2009 earthquake, previously investigated for the presence DSM-IV-TR PTSD, was reassessed according to DSM-5 criteria in order to explore gender differences. All subjects completed the Trauma and Loss Spectrum-Self Report (TALS-SR).

Results. Females showed significantly higher DSM-5 PTSD rates and rates of endorsement of almost all DSM-5 PTSD criteria. Significant gender differences emerged in almost half of PTSD symptomatological criteria with women reporting higher rates in almost half of them, while men in only one (a new symptom in DSM-5: *reckless or self-destructive behavior*). Considering the impact of the three new DSM-5 symptoms on the diagnosis, significant gender differences emerged with these being crucial in almost half of the PTSD diagnoses in males but in about one-fourth in females.

Conclusions. This study provides a contribution to the ongoing need for reassessment on how gender moderates rates of expression of particular disorders such as PTSD.