

PREVALENCE OF MENTAL DISORDERS AMONG KARAJÁ INDIANS IN A PRIMARY PSYCHIATRY SERVICE

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Introduction: Mental disorders are highly prevalent in the general population and are among the factors that most affect the quality of life, creating great social impact. The national literature that discusses mental disorders in indigenous is very scarce.

Objectives: To characterize the socio-demographic profile and major psychiatric disorders that affect a sample of indigenous villagers who sought primary care mental health.

Methods: We developed a retrospective cross-sectional study of a consecutive series of cases of Karajá Indians who sought primary care. Symptoms were classified as major syndromes: affective, anxiety, psychotic and organic, and then calculated the prevalence of each syndrome and psychiatric diagnosis according to DSM-IV, as well as their association with socio-demographic variables.

Results: 63% of the sample were male. Aged 10-67 years, mean 30.7 years. Schooling to 1st elementary school was 46.2%, and 26.9% illiteracy. 54.5% are married. The affective syndrome was present in 50% of patients, depression in 28%, and 21% in Bipolar Disorder. The anxiety disorder accounted for 8%, the psychotic 15%, and 12% organic. Considering the whole sample, 20% are composed of married patients with affective syndrome. Of the patients diagnosed with affective syndrome, 30% had problems with alcohol and drugs, 38% had suicidal ideation, and suicide attempt 6%. Regarding treatment used, 35% and 33% of patients were on antidepressants and mood stabilizers, respectively.

Conclusion: There is a high prevalence of Depression and Bipolar Disorder among the causes of mental disorder among Indians who seek primary care.