

PW01-102 - ETHNIC DIFFERENCES ON THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND BELIEFS TOWARDS MENTAL ILLNESS IN A TRADITIONAL FAST DEVELOPING COUNTRY

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Aim: The aim of study is to determine ethnics differences related to the knowledge, attitude and beliefs towards Mental Health Illness in a traditional fast developing country.

Design: A cross-sectional survey.

Setting: Primary Health Care (PHC) Centers. **Subjects:** A representative sample of 3000 Qatari and other Arab expatriates above 20 years of age and 2514 subjects (83.8%) expressed their consent to study.

Methods: A specific questionnaire was designed to assess the knowledge, attitude and beliefs towards mental health illness.

Results: Among the 2514 studied subjects, 50.3% were Qataris'(males 39.8% and females 60.2%) and 49.7% were Arab expatriates (58.6% males and 41.4% females). 50.6% Qatari and 44.5% Arabs believe that mental illness could be the result of punishment from God or, thought as it was due to the possession of evil spirits (40.5% Qatari's and 37.6% Arabs). More than half of Qatari's and Arabs think that psychiatric medication will cause addiction and consider mental illness as dangerous. 75.3% of Qatari's and 83.4% of Arabs respondents had no problem to visit a Psychiatrist for their emotional problem, and 42.3% of Qatari's and 36.4% of Arabs agreed to visit a healer for their problem. Less than half of the population are disturbed to work with someone who has mental illness and are afraid if anybody with mental illness are staying in next door. The common mental illness among Qatari's and Arab Populations described are: schizophrenia, depression, autism, anxiety, epileptic, obsession, and other reported mental illnesses.

Conclusion: People's knowledge and attitude about understanding the mentally sick were of negative impact.