

***Religious Delusions in a sample of inpatients  
in El-Abbassia Mental Health Hospital:  
Prevalence, Possible origin and Effect.***

*A thesis* submitted for partial fulfilment

Of

*Master* degree in neuropsychiatry

By

**Mahmoud Hassan Ibrahim El-Essawy**

*M.B.B.CH*

Supervised By

**Dr. Alaa EL-Din Mohamed Ali Soliman**

Professor of psychiatry

Faculty of medicine

Ain shams University

**Dr. Abeer Mahmoud Ahmed Eissa**

Professor of psychiatry

Faculty of medicine

Ain shams University

**Dr. Nesreen Mohamed Mohsen Ibrahim**

Assistant professor of psychiatry

Faculty of medicine

Ain shams University

2016





## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

*Firstly*, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors **Prof. Dr. Alaa EL-Din Soliman** and **Prof. Dr. Abeer Mahmoud** for the continuous support of my thesis, and for **Dr. Nesreen Mohsen** for her patience, motivation, and guidance helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis. I could not have imagined having a better advisors and mentors for my study.

*My sincere thanks* to **Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad** for his utmost support and understanding without both this thesis would have never been discussed.

*Last but not the least*; I must express my very profound gratitude to my colleagues in **El-Abbassyia**, friends and my family for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them.

***Thank you.***



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>RATIONALE OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>HYPOTHESIS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>AIM OF THE WORK .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 DELUSIONS .....</b>	<b>9</b>
HISTORY: .....	11
DEFINITION OF DELUSION .....	13
STAGES OF DELUSION FORMATION .....	20
DESCRIPTIVE PHENOMENOLOGY .....	21
CLASSIFICATIONS OF DELUSIONS .....	22
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DELUSIONS .....	24
TYPES OF PRIMARY DELUSIONS .....	29
CONTENTS OF DELUSIONS .....	30
CONTINUUM APPROACHES TO DELUSIONS .....	35
DELUSIONS AND MULTIDIMENSIONALITY .....	36
THE FORMS OF BELIEF .....	37
DELUSIONS, DELUSION-LIKE, OVERVALUED IDEAS AND IRRATIONAL BELIEFS .....	40
THEORIES AND APPROACHES TO FORMATION OF DELUSION .....	50
NEUROCOGNITIVE AND EMOTIONAL DYSFUNCTION THEORIES .....	54
<i>Attributional and cognitive approach</i> .....	54
<i>Probabilistic reasoning bias</i> .....	56
<i>'Jump-to-Conclusions' (JTC) reasoning bias in delusions</i> .....	57
<i>The role of emotions</i> .....	59
MULTIFACTORIAL MODEL .....	59
NEUROBIOLOGICAL THEORIES AND APPROACHES .....	60
THE PERSISTENCE AND ELASTICITY OF DELUSIONS .....	64
FACTORS CONCERNED IN THE GERMINATION OF DELUSIONS .....	68
FACTORS CONCERNED IN THE MAINTENANCE OF DELUSIONS .....	68
FATE OF DELUSION .....	69
PATTERN OF RESOLUTION .....	69
<b>CHAPTER 2 RELIGION .....</b>	<b>71</b>
DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY .....	73



TYPES OF RELIGIONS .....	76
MAJOR RELIGIONS AROUND THE WORLD FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL VIEW .....	77
PURPOSE OF RELIGION .....	78
RELIGION AND PSYCHIATRY .....	79
<b>CHAPTER 3 RELIGIOUS DELUSIONS .....</b>	<b>81</b>
RELIGIOUS DELUSIONS AND BIRTH OF FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY .....	83
DEFINITION OF RELIGIOUS DELUSION.....	84
PREVALENCE .....	89
RELIGION AND SHARED DELUSION .....	91
CULTURE AND PSYCHIATRY.....	92
RELIGIOUS DELUSIONS AND RELIGIOSITY .....	94
RELIGIOUS DELUSIONS AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF .....	96
RELIGIOUS CONVERSION, CULTS AND PSYCHOTIC SYMPTOMS .....	97
RELIGIOUS DELUSIONS IN EGYPT.....	102
RELIGIOUS DELUSIONS AND PROGNOSIS .....	109
<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>RESULTS.....</b>	<b>127</b>
THE FIRST (DESCRIPTIVE) STAGE .....	129
THE SECOND (CORRELATIVE) STAGE .....	137
<b>DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>151</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	153
PREVALENCE .....	154
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA & DIAGNOSIS .....	155
NUMBER OF PREVIOUS EPISODES.....	156
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE OF PATIENTS.....	157
SOCIAL CLASS .....	158
FUNCTIONING .....	159
SEVERITY .....	159
RELIGIOSITY .....	160
DELUSIONALITY.....	163
<b>CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>LIMITATIONS.....</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>SUMMERY.....</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>185</b>



## ***LIST OF TABLES***

Table 1 Phenomenological classification of delusions .....	23
Table 2 Classification of delusions according to cause (Cutting 1997) .....	24
Table 3 Jaspers' distinction between unmediated or direct and mediated or reflective phenomena .....	26
Table 4 Distribution of Age across the Sample .....	130
Table 5 Distribution of Gender across the Sample.....	130
Table 6 Distribution of Marital Status across Sample .....	131
Table 7 Distribution of level of education across the sample.....	131
Table 8 Distribution of occupation across the sample.....	132
Table 9 Distribution of diagnosis across the sample.....	132
Table 10 Prevalence of religious delusion across the sample.....	133
Table 11 Correlation between cases & controls regarding the age in years ....	137
Table 12 correlation between cases & controls regarding the gender.....	138
Table 13 correlation between cases & controls regarding the marital status..	138
Table 14 correlation between Cases and Controls regarding level of education .....	139
Table 15 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding occupation.....	140
Table 16 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding diagnosis.....	141
Table 17 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding number of previous episodes .....	142
Table 18 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding frequency of physical violence .....	142
Table 19 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding Fahmy and El- Sherbini's scale and Family Socio-Economic Status .....	143
Table 20 Correlation between cases & controls regarding the GAF scale .....	144
Table 21 Correlation between the cases and controls regarding BPRS .....	144
Table 22 Delusion vs. Religion Cross tabulation.....	145
Table 23 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding Religious Orientation Scale (Muslim) .....	145
Table 24 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding Religious Orientation Scale (Christian) .....	146
Table 25 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding Brown Assessment of Belief Scale (BABS) .....	147
Table 26 Correlation between Cases and Controls regarding all 6 dimensions of Brown Assessment of Belief Scale.....	148



## ***LIST OF FIGURES***

Figure 1 Roberts, G. (1992) reviewed all concepts and gave the following general model of delusion formation .....	60
Figure 2 Alexander et al.'s (1986) proposed five structural functional loops.....	62
Figure 3 A representative figure for prevalence of religious delusions in the sample .....	135



# *Introduction*

