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Prevalence of Eating Disorders and Alexithymia among a sample of Egyptian Medical Students not Attending Psychiatric Clinics

AThesis

Submitted for Partial fulfilment of M.D. degree in Psychiatry

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My thanks are submitted first and foremost to **ALLAH** who gave me the strength and ability to complete this work, making this moment come true

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to **Prof. Dr. Heba Ibrahim Essawy,** Professor of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University, for her unconditional support, timely feedback, supplying me with materials and insights and for the time she has devoted to the fulfillment of this work.

My sincere gratitude and appreciation are also due to **Prof. Dr. Nivert Zaki Hashem,** Professor of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University, for her kind help, constant encouragement, constructive criticism, and her decent and elegant manner.

I can't forget to thank with all appreciation, **Dr. Youmna Ahmed El hawary,** Lecturer of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University, for the efforts and time she has devoted to accomplish this work & her valuable role and support during the whole work.

I can't forget to thank with all appreciation, **Dr. Mahmoud Hassan Ali Morsy**, Lecturer of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University, the unknown soldier of this work, for being responsible, responsive and keen.

I was lucky to work under supervision of this great team.

Great thanks go to all members of my **parents**, who always believed in me, my **Husband**, for tolerating my anxiety and helping me in IT and the great help in all step of my career.

I also want to thank all **medical students** who accepted to participate in this work, promising them to raise awareness about their distress.

Thanks to **Dr. Hazem ElHariry**, Lecturer of statistics in National center of research who did the statistics in this work.

Thanks to my dear colleagues in different academic departments who helped me to reach the students (Aya Abdellattif, Shaimaa Saeed, and Nahla Mohamed), together with our future colleague Lamiaa El mahalawy, Islam the IT technician in our institute for helping me.

Thanks to Egyptian Knowledge Bank, for removing barriers in the way of science.

Not to forget our colleague and younger brother Mohamed Nasr, asking God he gets well soon.

Last but not least, to the one and only **Maria** my princess, maybe I am not the perfect mom but I will try to make you proud of me.



Prevalence of Eating Disorders and Alexithymia among a sample of Egyptian Medical Students Not Attending Psychiatric Clinics

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Abstract

Background: Eating disorders are prevalent psychiatric disorders and a major Public health burden worldwide, having huge impact on physical and mental health, The student population seems to be vulnerable to eating disorders, but is this in relation to their ability to express their emotions or alexithymia?

Aim of the work: To evaluate the relationship between alexithymia and eating disorders.

Subjects and methods: this is a cross sectional study done on a stratified random sample of 575 medical students in Ain- Shams University, started from 2018 till July 2019, those with history of chronic physical or mental illness were excluded, all students were subjected to Designed clinical sheet for demographic data, Arabic version of Eating Attitude Test -26 (EAT-26) as screening tool for eating disturbances in non-clinical populations and Arabic version of Toronto scale 20 to measure alexithymia.

Results: our study revealed disordered eating 12.3% among the study sample, alexithymia 24.4% and significant variation in scores of eating disorder according to alexithymia scores.

Conclusion: our study revealed positive correlation between eating disorders and alexithymia consistently with hypothesis of emotional regulation deficits in eating disorders.

Keywords: eating disorders, alexithymia, emotional expression

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List of Abbreviations

Abbr. Title AN : Anorexia nervosa **ARFID** : Avoidant-restrictive food intake disorder BD : Body dissatisfaction : Binge eating disorder BED : Binge Eating Scale BES BIT : Body Image Test : Body mass index BMI BN : Bulimia nervosa BN: Bulimia nervosa CR : Cognitive restraint DALYS : disability adjusted life years : Difficulty describing feelings **DDF** : Difficulty identifying feelings DIF : Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental disorders **DSM** DT : drive to thinness **Eeat** : Eat emotional eating : Eating Attitude Test -26 **EAT-26** : Eating Disorders Inventory EDI-II : Eating disorder not otherwise specified **EDNOS** : Eating disorders **EDs** : Externally-oriented thinking **EOT**

FWA : Federal Wide Assurance

GHQ-28 : General health questionnaire-28

ICD : International Classification of Diseases

IE : Ineffectiveness

Perf : Perfectionism

REC: Research Ethical Committee

SD : Standard deviation

SPSS : Statistical package for social science

SSLRs: Stratum-specific likelihood ratios

TAS-20: Toronto Alexithymia Scale

UE : Uncontrolled eating

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