

Frequency of reporting and socio-demographic characteristics of help-seeking clinical-population of delusional jealousy in Sri Lanka

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Submitted on 06.06.2021 and accepted for publication on 07.12.2021

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Delusional jealousy has received limited attention in the psychiatric literature. Information on prevalence and demographical trends of delusional jealousy are essential in the design of effective control measures are sparse and fragmentary. Present study was aimed to describe case numbers and socio-demographic characteristics of patients with delusional jealousy reported to selected mental health services in Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted from May to August 2017, in three public hospitals and one private psychiatric clinic. Data were collected using a general information sheet and a structured interview schedule.

Results: Fifty (65.78%) out of 76 reported cases during the period were new cases. The mean (SD) age of the patients was 44.15 (11.58) years. Selected sample consisted of 55 patients (male=39, 70.9 %). Thirty-seven (67.2%) were married and lived with their spouses. The majority were Buddhists (N=50, 90.9%) and Sinhalese (N=54, 98.2%). Fifty (90.9%) had children together with the partner. Twenty-three (41.68%) were not Ordinary Level qualified and 36 (66.7%) patients were employed.

Conclusions: The majority of patients were married, middle aged males, from lower educational and economic backgrounds. Follow-up consultations were less. Most patients were functional despite the condition. The majority of the patients lived together with their partners and children in the same household which might precipitate a risk of violence towards the partners and subjective exposure of children towards violence.

Keywords: *Delusional jealousy, demographic characteristics, help-seeking*

Introduction

Jealousy sits high atop among the very human emotional experiences. In spite of the unequivocal presence in interpersonal relationships, jealousy is hard to be defined and its origin, nature and rationale are meagrely understood (1). Similarly, the concept of jealousy is both ambiguous and imprecise and therefore, deriving a scientific account out of an

everyday term has been arduous. In the context of romance, jealousy is generally viewed as a multifaceted negative emotional reaction that is activated when a valued relationship or its quality is threatened by a real or imaginary rival. Even amidst of questions and debates surrounding terminology of jealousy, today a majority of