

Prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among Palestinians During the Israeli

Results

In this study, 762 individuals who have experienced a traumatic event participated in the study, 369 (48.4%) males and 393 (51.6%) females, their mean age was 24.06±13.618 years.

Table (1): Sociodemographic characteristics of study participants

Variable	Number	Percent
Age		
Teen age	419	55.0
20 – 29 years	105	13.8
30 – 39 years	112	14.7
40 – 49 years	82	10.8
50 years and more	44	5.8
Total	762	100.0
Level of education		
Prep school and less (up to 9 th class)	398	52.2
Secondary school (class 10 – 12)	160	21.0
University	204	26.8
Total	762	100.0
Work status		
Working / employed	156	20.5
Not working	606	79.5
Total	762	100.0
Marital status		
Single	478	62.7
Married	248	32.5
Divorced	22	2.9
Widow	14	1.8
Total	762	100.0

Table (1) showed that 419 (55%) of respondents are teen age, 105 (13.8%) aged 20 – 29 years old, 112 (14.7%) aged 30 – 39 years old, 398 (52.2%) have an education up to 9th class, 160 (21%) have an education between class 10 to 12, and 204 (26.8%) have university education. The majority of respondents 606 (79.5%) are not working, while only 156 (20.5%) are working. About two-thirds of respondents 478 (62.7%) are single, 248 (32.5%) are married, 22 (2.9%) are divorced, and 14 (1.8%) are widowed.

Table (2): Experience of traumatic event

Variable	Yes	No
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Have you experienced a traumatic event?	762(100.0)	0
Did you feel that your psychological state has changed following this event?	755(99.1)	7(0.9)
Has it been more than a month since these symptoms after the accident?	742(97.4)	20(2.6)
Has your performance at work been affected?	557(73.1)	205(26.9)
Have your social relationships been affected?	647(84.9)	115(15.1)

Table (2) indicated that 755 (99.1%) of respondents felt that their psychological state has changed following this event, 742 (97.4%) stated that it has been more than a month since these symptoms after the accident, 557 (73.1%) reported that their performance at work has been affected, and 647 (84.9%) of respondents said that their social relationship has been affected.

Prevalence of PTSD symptoms

Table (3): Summary of re-experiencing symptoms

No.	Item	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD	%
1	Do you have recurring thoughts about the traumatic event?	2.0	21.8	42.5	33.7	2.08	0.793	69.3
2	Do you have recurring scenes (images) related to the traumatic event?	1.8	19.6	51.8	26.8	2.04	0.732	68.0
3	Are you afraid of a repeat of the traumatic event?	3.4	14.4	32.9	49.2	2.28	0.834	76.0
4	Do you have disturbing dreams (nightmares) related to the traumatic event?	7.7	30.3	36.2	25.7	1.80	0.912	60.0
5	Do you get upset when someone reminds you of the traumatic event?	5.6	26.2	45.3	22.8	1.85	0.834	61.6
6	Are you disturbed when you see images that remind you of the traumatic event?	4.9	23.1	46.2	25.9	1.93	0.824	64.3
7	Do you feel disturbed when seeing or being at the place of the traumatic event?	3.7	23.4	39.9	33.1	2.02	0.844	67.3
	Average	4.1	22.7	42.1	31.1	2.00	0.604	66.6

Table (3) showed that 42.5% of respondents often and 33.7% always have recurring thoughts about the traumatic event, 51.8% often and 26.8% always have recurring scenes (images) related to the traumatic event, 32.9% often and 49.2% always afraid of a repeat of the traumatic event, 36.2% often and 25.7% always have disturbing dreams (nightmares) related to the traumatic event, 45.3% often and 22.8% always get upset when someone reminds you of the traumatic event, 46.2% often and 25.9% always disturbed when you see images that remind you of the traumatic event, and 39.9% often and 33.1% always feel disturbed when seeing or being at the place of the traumatic

event. Overall, 42.1% of respondents often and 31.1% always re-experiencing recurring memories of the traumatic event. The average mean score for this domain was 2.00 with mean percent 66.6%.

Table (4): Summary of avoidance behaviors

No.	Item	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD	%
8	Do you avoid thinking about the traumatic event?	4.1	17.5	50.0	28.5	2.03	0.789	67.6
9	Do you avoid talking about the traumatic event?	3.8	21.9	50.8	23.5	1.94	0.777	64.6
10	Do you avoid situations that remind you of the traumatic event?	3.3	22.8	53.7	20.2	1.91	0.744	63.6
11	Do you avoid activities that remind you of the traumatic event?	9.3	25.2	47.1	18.4	1.75	0.863	58.3
12	Do you avoid participating in recreational activities?	12.5	31.4	40.4	15.7	1.59	0.898	53.0
13	Do you turn away from friends (tend to be lonely)	15.6	36.5	35.3	12.6	1.45	0.902	48.3
	Average	8.2	25.8	46.2	19.8	1.77	0.573	59.0

Table (4) indicated that 50% of respondents often and 28.5% always avoid thinking about the traumatic event, 50.8% often and 23.5% always avoid talking about the traumatic event, 53.7% often and 20.2% always avoid situations that remind you of the traumatic event, 47.1% often and 18.4% always avoid activities that remind you of the traumatic event, 40.4% often and 15.7% always avoid participating in recreational activities, and 35.3% often and 12.6% always turn away from friends (tend to be lonely). Overall, 46.2% of respondents often and 19.8% always avoiding thoughts that trigger the event. The average mean score for this domain was 1.77 with mean percent 59%.

Table (5): Summary of negative changes in perception and mood

No.	Item	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD	%
14	Do you feel guilty about yourself?	34.4	32.2	25.5	8.0	1.07	0.956	35.6
15	Do you have negative feelings towards others?	20.6	32.2	39.9	7.3	1.34	0.886	44.6

16	Do you have difficulty or not being able to achieve (achieve goals)?	9.3	31.9	39.4	19.4	1.69	0.889	56.3
17	Do you feel sad because of the traumatic event?	5.2	24.9	43.6	26.2	1.91	0.845	63.6
18	Do you find it difficult to sleep for several hours?	4.7	25.9	40.8	28.6	1.93	0.854	64.3
19	Are you feeling increasingly cautious	3.3	16.4	35.7	44.6	2.22	0834	74.0
	Average	12.9	27.2	37.5	22.35	1.69	0.564	56.3

Table (5) showed that 25.5% of respondents often and 8% always feel guilty about their selves, 39.9% often and 7.3% always have negative feelings towards others, 39.4% often and 19.4% always have difficulty or not being able to achieve goals, 43.6% often and 26.2% always feel sad because of the traumatic event, 40.8% often and 28.6% always find it difficult to sleep for several hours, and 35.7% often and 44.6% always feel increasingly cautious. Overall, 37.5% of respondents often and 22.35% always have negative thoughts and mood swings. The average mean score for this domain was 1.69 with mean percent 56.3%.

Table (6): Summary of excessive excitement and behavioral changes

No.	Item	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD	%
20	Do you feel unjustifiably angry?	7.3	29.9	33.9	28.9	1.84	0.926	61.3
21	Do you engage in violence/aggressive behavior against others?	22.4	31.5	35.8	10.2	1.34	0.937	44.6

22	Do you punish yourself (such as deprivation)?	41.3	37.9	16.8	3.9	0.83	0.844	27.6
23	Do you act impulsively without giving enough time to think?	14.4	34.0	35.0	16.5	1.54	0.932	51.3
24	Do you have the desire to break things (plates, cups, tools...)	36.0	25.7	29.1	9.2	1.12	1.003	37.3
25	Do you have a desire to practice violent games (boxing, wrestling, karate)	47.5	22.2	20.7	9.6	0.92	1.030	30.6
26	Do you have a desire to play violent games on mobile / computer	52.2	16.4	18.8	12.6	0.92	1.099	30.6
	Average	31.6	28.2	27.2	13.0	1.21	0.706	40.3

Table (6) showed that 33.9% of respondents often and 28.9% always feel unjustifiably angry, 35.8% often and 10.2% always engage in violence or aggressive behavior against others, 16.8% often and 3.9% always punish themselves such as deprivation, 35% often and 16.5% always act impulsively without giving enough time to think, 29.1% often and 9.2% always have the desire to break things such as plates, cups, and tools, 20.7% often and 9.6% always have a desire to practice violent games such as boxing, wrestling, and karate, and 18.8% often and 12.6% always have a desire to play violent games on mobile or computer. Overall, 27.2% of respondents often and 13% always have excessive excitement and behavioral changes. The average mean score for this domain was 1.21 with mean percent 40.3%.

Table (7): Summary of physiological changes

No.	Item	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD	%
27	Do you get acceleration in the heartbeat when	11.8	24.3	38.7	25.2	1.77	0.958	59.0

	remembering the traumatic event?							
28	Do you have rapid or shortness of breath when remembering the traumatic event?	14.2	25.5	37.9	22.4	1.69	0.974	56.3
29	Do you sweat when remembering the traumatic event?	28.9	28.5	31.9	10.8	1.25	0.990	41.6
30	Do you have the urge to vomit and feel sick when remembering the traumatic event?	48.3	27.0	19.2	5.5	0.82	0.929	27.3
	Average	25.8	26.3	31.9	16.0	1.38	0.809	46.0

Table (7) showed that 38.7% of respondents often and 25.2% always get acceleration in the heartbeat when remembering the traumatic event, 37.9% often and 22.4% always have rapid or shortness of breath when remembering the traumatic event, 31.9% often and 10.8% always sweat when remembering the traumatic event, 19.2% often and 5.5% always have the urge to vomit and feel sick when remembering the traumatic event. Overall, 31.9% of respondents often and 16% always have physiological changes. The average mean score was 1.38 with mean percent 46%.

Table (8): Prevalence and severity of PTSD symptoms

Severity of disorder	Total score	Number	Percent
No disturbance	0 – 30	92	12.1
Mild disturbance	31 – 40	115	15.1
Moderate disturbance	41 – 50	218	28.6
Severe disturbance	51 – 60	169	22.2
Very severe disturbance	61 - 90	168	22.0
Total		762	100.0

Table (8) provides information on the prevalence and severity of PTSD symptoms based on total scores on the assessment tool (PTSD-S-i30).

The distribution of respondents across the severity categories reveals that the majority of individuals (28.6%) fall into the "moderate disturbance" category. Following that, there are substantial proportions of individuals in the "severe disturbance" (22.2%) and "very severe disturbance" (22.0%) categories. A smaller proportion of individuals fall into the "mild disturbance" (15.1%) and "no disturbance" (12.1%) categories.

Overall, this table underscores the significant prevalence of PTSD symptoms within the population under study, with a notable proportion experiencing moderate to very severe disturbance. Such data can guide healthcare professionals and policymakers in allocating resources and designing interventions to address PTSD effectively at varying levels of severity.

Severity of PTSD symptoms and sociodemographic factors

Table (9): Association between severity of PTSD symptoms and sociodemographic factors

Factor	Group	Severity of PTSD symptoms					X ²	Sig.
		0-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61 and more		
Gender	Male	60(16.3)	40(10.8)	100(27.1)	83(22.5)	86(23.3)	20.073	< 0.001
	Female	32(8.1)	75(19.1)	118(30.0)	86(21.9)	82(20.9)		
Age	Teen age	30(7.2)	42(10.0)	138(32.9)	102(24.3)	107(25.5)	85.161	< 0.001
	20 – 29 years	19(18.1)	25(23.8)	20(19.0)	13(12.4)	28(26.7)		
	30 – 39 years	20(17.9)	11(9.8)	36(32.1)	28(25.0)	17(15.2)		
	40 – 49 years	13(15.9)	29(35.4)	13(15.9)	16(19.5)	11(13.4)		
	≥50 years	10(22.7)	8(18.2)	11(25.0)	10(22.7)	5(11.4)		
Education	Prep and less	19(4.8)	40(10.1)	127(31.9)	105(26.4)	107(26.9)	85.476	< 0.001
	Secondary	30(18.8)	23(14.4)	37(23.1)	31(19.4)	39(24.4)		
	University	43(21.1)	52(25.5)	54(26.50)	33(16.2)	22(10.8)		
Work	Working	35(22.4)	28(17.9)	39(25.0)	34(21.8)	20(12.8)	26.987	< 0.001
	Not working	57(9.4)	87(14.4)	179(29.5)	135(22.3)	148(24.4)		
Marital status	Single	43(9.0)	51(10.7)	152(31.8)	110(23.0)	110(25.5)	69.283	< 0.001
	Married	44(17.7)	46(18.5)	60(24.2)	54(21.8)	44(17.7)		
	Divorced	5(22.7)	12(54.5)	3(13.6)	2(9.1)	0(0.0)		
	Widowed	0(0.0)	6(42.9)	3(21.4)	3(21.4)	2(14.3)		

Table (9) presents data on the association between the severity of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) symptoms and various sociodemographic.

Gender: The table shows that males generally report higher levels of PTSD symptoms compared to females, with a statistically significant association ($X^2 = 20.073$, $p < 0.001$).

Age: PTSD symptoms appear to vary across different age groups. Teenagers and individuals aged 50 years and older tend to report lower levels of symptoms compared to those in other age groups. There's a significant association between age and PTSD severity ($X^2 = 85.161$, $p < 0.001$).

Education: There is a notable association between education level and PTSD symptoms, with individuals who have received higher education reporting lower levels of symptoms. This association is statistically significant ($X^2 = 85.476$, $p < 0.001$).

Work status: Those who are not working tend to report higher levels of PTSD symptoms compared to those who are employed. This association is statistically significant ($X^2 = 26.987$, $p < 0.001$).

Marital status: Marital status also associated with PTSD symptom severity. Single individuals tend to report higher levels of symptoms compared to those who are married, divorced, or widowed. This association is statistically significant ($X^2 = 69.283$, $p < 0.001$).

Overall, the table highlights significant associations between sociodemographic factors and the severity of PTSD symptoms. These findings can inform interventions and support strategies tailored to specific demographic groups experiencing higher levels of PTSD symptoms.