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An Example of a Retrospective Analysis of the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Substance Abuse Patients Receiving Inpatient Treatment

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Abstract

Objective: The aim of this study was to examine the socio-demographic data of the patients who attended the AMATEM clinic in 2019, but to evaluate them according to the forensic case situation, which is a gap in the literature, and to share it with the scientific world.

Method: The medical records of 481 patients who underwent inpatient treatment at the AMATEM clinic of Kayseri State Hospital in 2019 were retrospectively reviewed. Sociodemographic characteristics, physical and psychiatric disorders, military service status, smoking and alcohol consumption, type of substance and consumption, and forensic case status of the patients were studied. The statistical evaluation of the data was recorded in a database prepared using the SPSS 23 program, with a confidence level of 95% and a statistical significance limit of $p<0.05$ for all analyses.

Results: The mean age of the participants in our study was 32.12±10.25 years. It is observed that 54.9% of the participants (n=264) were married. It was found that 21.2% (n=102) of the participants had not served in the military, while 1.5% (n=7) were still soldiers. When the number of hospitalisations of the participants was examined, it was found that 88.4% (n=425) were hospitalised for the first time, 8.9% (n=43) for the second time, 1.5% (n=7) for the third time, 0.8% (n=4) for the fourth time, 0.2% (n=1) for the fifth time and 0.2% (n=1) for the seventh time. The mean length of hospital stay was 11.57±8.07 days, with a minimum of 0 days (same day discharge) and a maximum of 41 days. At the same time, a statistical significance was found between the number of substances use and methamphetamine use of the participants and the decriminalisation cases, while at the same time 15% of the participants (n=72) had never used substances (p=0.002, p=0.000 respectively).

Conclusion: It is believed that the study will contribute to the cumulative knowledge due to the fact that there is a limited number of studies in the literature on the subject we are doing. The implementation of studies in this area, which is lacking, will be a guide both to the scientific world and to individuals working in the relevant field in the field.

Keywords: Addiction, substance use, sociodemographic characteristics

Özet

Amaç: Bu çalışma AMATEM kliniğine 2019 yılı içerisinde başvuru yapmış olan hastaların sosyo-demografik verilerinin irdelenmesi bununla birlikte literatürde boşluğu bulunan adli vaka durumuna göre değerlendirilmesi ve bilim dünyası ile paylaşılması amaçlanmıştır.

Yöntem: Kayseri Devlet Hastanesi 2019 yılı AMATEM kliniğinde yatarak tedavi gören 481 hastanın tıbbi kayıtları geriye dönük incelenmiştir. Hastaların sosyodemografik özellikleri, fiziki ve psikiyatrik rahatsızlıkları, askerlik durumu, sigara ve alkol kullanımı, madde ve kullanım çeşitleri, adli vaka durumu araştırılmıştır. Verinin istatistiksel değerlendirmesi SPSS 23 programı ile hazırlanan bir veri tabanına kaydedilerek, güvenilirlik düzeyi %95 olarak alındı ve tüm analizler için istatistiksel anlamlılık sınırı $p<0.05$ olarak kabul edilmiştir.

Bulgular: Çalışmamızdaki katılımcıların yaş ortalaması 32,12±10,25 saptanmıştır. Katılımcıların %54,9'unun (n=264) evli olduğu görülmektedir. Katılımcıların %21,2' sinin (n= 102) askerlik yapmadığı, %1,5'inin (n=7) ise halen asker olduğu saptanmıştır. Katılımcıların hastaneye yatış sayıları incelendiğinde %88,4'ünün (n=425) hastaneye birinci, %8,9'unun (n=43) ikinci, %1,5'inin (n=7) üçüncü, %0,8'inin (n=4) dördüncü, %0,2'sinin (n=1) beşinci ve %0,2'sinin (n=1) yedinci yatışı olduğu belirlendi. Hastanede yatış süresi ortalamasının 11,57±8,07 olduğu, minimum 0 gün (aynı gün taburculuk), maksimum 41 gün olduğu saptandı. Katılımcıların %15' inin (n=72) hiç madde kullanmadığı aynı zamanda katılımcıların madde kullanım sayıları ve metamfetamin kullanımı ile adli vaka olma durumları arasında istatistiki anlamlılık saptanmıştır(sırasıyla p=0,002, p=0,000).

Sonuç: Çalışmanın yaptığımız konuda literatürde sınırlı sayıda araştırmanın olmasından dolayı birikimsel bilgiye katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir. Eksiklik bulunan bu alanda çalışmaların gerçekleştirilmesi hem bilim dünyasına hem de sahada ilgili alanda çalışan bireylere yön gösterici nitelik taşıyacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Bağımlılık, Madde Kullanımı, Sosyodemografik Özellikler

Introduction

Since ancient times, people have tried everything to amuse themselves or feel euphoric, discovering herbs, special mixtures and the like. For this reason, the use of drugs and non-drug substances has increased in recent years. The problem of substance abuse is one of the most serious and growing problems, leading to an increase in morbidity and mortality with a range of health problems worldwide. Substance abuse is one of the top 20 risk factors for health worldwide, and health care costs for substance abusers are almost double those of non-users (1).

Drug addiction is difficult to treat, and is further complicated in the case of polysubstance abuse, where the addict's drug use does not involve a single primary drug. According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report, long-term use of a psychoactive substance can lead to an addiction syndrome in the addict (1).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that 155-250 million people (3.5-5.7 per cent) aged 15-64 worldwide used illicit substances at least once in 2014, of whom 10-15 per cent had mental health problems. Cannabis is estimated to be the most commonly abused substance (129-190 million), followed by amphetamines (13.7-52.9 million), opiates (12.8-21.8 million) and cocaine. Co-morbidity resulting in the spread of infectious diseases through the sharing of injecting equipment is common. 12 million people are estimated to be injecting drug users, including 1.6 million with HIV, 6.1 million with hepatitis C, 1.3 million with hepatitis C and HIV, and a high incidence of tuberculosis among them (1,2).

It is known that the rates of drug use in Turkey are relatively lower than in the countries of the European continent and the United States of America (USA), but it is also known that there is an increasing trend in the prevalence of drug use. It is known that the largest prevalence survey in the field of addiction has been conducted by the Turkish Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (TUBIM). According to this survey, conducted in 2011 among the population aged 15-64, it is estimated that 1 million 351 thousand people use drugs, which is 2.7 per cent of the total population (3).

The Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment and Research Centre (AMATEM) in Kayseri province was opened in 2007. Although there have been administrative changes over the years, it is still in operation today. It provides medical treatment and rehabilitation services to both outpatients and inpatients. Patients who apply to the clinic are assessed in the outpatient clinic, and then those who are expected to require inpatient treatment are given an appointment and admitted to the clinic. In-patients are given the most appropriate treatment for the removal of toxic substances according to the body's response to the withdrawal of the substance. Once the process of eliminating toxic substances is complete, rehabilitation services are provided to patients individually and in groups, together with the necessary pharmacological treatments to resolve their emotional and behavioural problems, and to improve and protect their mental health. Information such as psychiatric assessment notes, treatments and personal data of patients admitted to the clinic are stored in patient files and hospital information systems. Analysis of the socio-demographic data, clinical characteristics and treatment methods of substance-dependent patients is of great importance for the prevention and treatment of these diseases, which are becoming increasingly prevalent in society. In this sense, the aim is to study the socio-demographic data of the patients who attended the AMATEM clinic in 2019, as well as to evaluate them according to the forensic case status, which is a gap in the literature, and to share them with the scientific world.

Study Design, Participants and Procedure

In this study, the records of 481 patients who received inpatient treatment at the AMATEM Clinic of Kayseri State Hospital in 2019 were retrospectively analysed. Our study, which was based on the principle of adherence to the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki, also has a research permit dated 23.08.2021 and numbered 146012545 issued by Kayseri Provincial Health Directorate.

Since 1952, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) published by the American Psychiatric Association has been replaced by the DSM-5, the latest edition of which was published in 2013; Patients were included if they had a high level of craving for the substance with developed withdrawal symptoms, repeated use of the substance in physically dangerous situations, developed tolerance to the substance, were unable to stop using the substance despite craving, continued to use despite knowing the harm, and had at least one toxic substance found in urine tests.

Sociodemographic data such as age, sex, place of birth, marital status, disease diagnoses and length of hospitalisation were obtained from the patient registration system, and other data were obtained through interviews with the data processor.

Statistical Analyses

The data obtained were analysed clinically and/or prognostically in the computer environment, together with the socio-demographic characteristics, length of hospital stay, chronic diseases and clinical conditions of the participants. Numbers and percentages were

used in the presentation of frequency tables, and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and skewness and kurtosis values were used to assess the suitability of numerical data for normal distribution. Parametric tests were used to compare groups that showed normal distribution and met parametric assumptions, and non-parametric tests were used for groups that did not meet parametric assumptions. In the analyses, the confidence level was set at 95% and $p<0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Results

The flowchart of our study is shown in Figure 1 below.

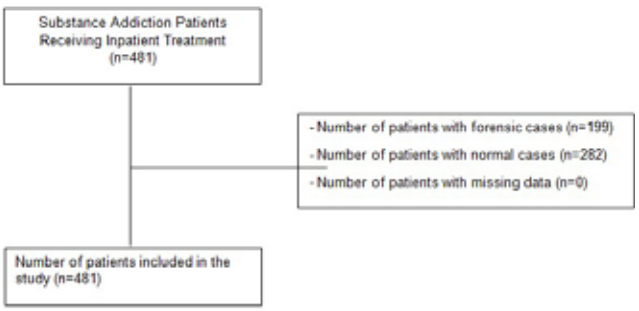

Figure 1 Flowchart (Note: Figure created by the authors)

The mean age of the participants in our study was 32.12±10.25 years. Of the participants, 96% (n=462) were male and 4% (n=19) were female. Regarding the place of birth, 78.6% (n=378) of the participants were born in Kayseri. The nationality of 98.3% (n=473) of the participants was the Republic of Turkey. 96.9% (n=466) of the participants had no physical illness. 87.1% (n=419) of the participants did not have a psychiatric illness. When the participants were analysed according to their educational status, 40.7% (n=196) were middle school graduates, 34.5% (n=166) were high school graduates, and 1.7% (n=8) were university graduates. When analysing the participants according to their occupation, tradesmen were in first place with 44.1% (n=212) and the unemployed in second place with 34.3% (n=165).

It was found that 54.9% (n=264) of the participants were married. It was found that 21.2% (n=102) of the participants had not served in the military and 1.5% (n=7) were still serving in the military. It was found that 58.6% (n=282) of the participants had not undergone a judicial investigation. Statistical significance was found between participants' place of birth and military service status and their status as a judicial case (p=0.000, p=0.002, respectively). The socio-demographic characteristics, forensic investigation status, military service status, psychiatric and physical disorders of the participants are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Some information about the participants

	All Patients (n = 481)	Forensic cases (n=199)	Normal cases (n=282)	P value
Age, Year (mean±SD)	32,10±10,25	30,35±8,89	33,34±10,96	0,092
Gender (n (%))				0,436
Male	462 (96)	189 (95,0)	273 (96,8)	
Woman	19 (4)	10 (5,0)	9 (3,2)	
Place of Birth (n (%))				0,000*
Kayseri	378 (78,6)	173 (86,9)	205 (72,7)	
Other Provinces	103 (21,4)	26 (13,1)	77 (27,3)	
Nationality (n (%))				0,148
Turkish	473 (98,3)	198 (99,5)	275 (97,5)	
Other	8 (1,7)	1 (0,5)	7 (2,5)	
Physical Discomfort (n (%))				1,000
Those without Disorders	466 (96,9)	193 (96,0)	273 (96,8)	
People with Disorders	15 (3,1)	6 (4,0)	9 (3,2)	
Psychiatric Disorder (n (%))				0,464
Those without Disorders	419 (87,1)	176 (88,4)	243 (86,2)	
People with Disorders	62 (12,9)	23 (11,6)	39 (13,8)	

TABLE 1: Some information about the participants

	All Patients (n = 481)	Forensic cases (n=199)	Normal cases (n=282)	P value
Education (n (%))				0,106
Primary School	111 (23,1)	35 (17,6)	76 (27,0)	
Middle School	196 (40,7)	89 (44,7)	107 (37,9)	
High School	166 (34,5)	71 (35,7)	95 (33,7)	
University	8 (1,7)	4 (2,0)	4 (1,5)	
Occupation (n (%))				0,050
Tradesmen	212 (44,1)	81 (40,7)	131 (46,5)	
Labourer	62 (12,9)	29 (14,6)	34 (12,1)	
Unemployed	165 (34,3)	76 (38,2)	88 (31,2)	
Pensioner	18 (3,7)	7 (3,5)	11 (3,9)	
Student	13 (2,7)	6 (3,0)	7 (2,5)	
Officer	11 (2,3)	0 (0)	11 (3,9)	
Marital Status (n (%))				0,086
Married	264 (54,9)	100 (50,3)	164 (58,2)	
Single	217 (45,1)	99 (49,7)	118 (41,8)	
Military Service (n (%))				0,002*
Served Military Service	379 (78,8)	143 (71,9)	236 (83,7)	
No Military Service	102 (21,2)	56 (28,1)	46 (16,3)	

* p<0,005

The alcohol and drug use status of participants was analysed according to the types of substances they used, whether or not they were forensic cases. It was found that 15% (n=72) of the participants did not use any substances, 58.6% (n=282) used one substance, 20.2% (n=97) used two substances and 6.2% (n=30) used three substances.

Statistical significance was found between participants' number of substances used and methamphetamine use and their status as a forensic case (p=0.002 and p=0.000, respectively). The relationship between participants' alcohol use, substance types and intravenous (IV) use and their status as a forensic case or not is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2: Associations between participants' alcohol/substance use status.

	All Patients (n = 481)	Forensic cases (n=199)	Normal cases (n=282)	P value
Substance Use (n (%))				0,002*
Unused	72 (15)	16 (8,0)	56 (19,9)	
Use of a Substance	282 (58,6)	126 (63,3)	156 (55,3)	
Two Substance Use	97 (20,2)	47 (23,6)	50 (17,7)	
Three Substance Use	30 (6,2)	10 (5,0)	20 (7,1)	
Alcohol Use (n (%))				0,372
No	104 (21,6)	47 (23,6)	57 (20,2)	
Yes	377 (78,4)	152 (76,4)	225 (79,8)	
Amphetamine Use (n (%))				1,000
No	474 (98,5)	196 (98,5)	278 (98,6)	
Yes	7 (1,5)	3 (1,5)	4 (1,4)	

TABLE 2: Associations between participants' alcohol/substance use status.

	All Patients (n = 481)	Forensic cases (n=199)	Normal cases (n=282)	P value
Methamphetamine Use (n (%))				0,000*
No	275 (57,2)	88 (44,7)	187 (66,7)	
Yes	206 (42,8)	111 (55,3)	95 (33,3)	
Ecstasy Use (n (%))				0,699
No	437 (90,9)	182 (91,5)	255 (90,4)	
Yes	44 (9,1)	17 (8,5)	27 (9,6)	
Synthetic Cannabis (n (%))				0,012
No	279 (58,0)	102 (51,3)	177 (62,8)	
Yes	202 (42,0)	97 (48,7)	105 (37,2)	
Cocaine (n (%))				0,855
No	457 (95,0)	190 (95,5)	267 (94,7)	
Yes	24 (5,0)	9 (4,5)	15 (5,3)	
Heroin (n (%))				0,785
No	401 (83,4)	167 (83,9)	234 (83,0)	
Yes	80 (16,6)	32 (16,1)	48 (17,0)	
Morphine (n (%))				-
No	481 (100)	199 (41,4)	282 (58,6)	
Yes	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Volatile (n (%))				1,000
No	480 (99,8)	199 (41,4)	281 (58,4)	
Yes	1 (0,2)	0 (0)	1 (0,2)	
Diazepam-Nordiazepam (n (%))				-
No	481 (100)	199 (41,4)	282 (58,6)	
Yes	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Clonazepam (n (%))				-
No	481 (100)	199 (41,4)	282 (58,6)	
Yes	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Lorazepam (n (%))				-
No	481 (100)	199 (41,4)	282 (58,6)	
Yes	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Intravenous use status (n (%))				0,822
No	401 (83,3)	165 (41,1)	236 (58,9)	
Yes	80 (16,7)	34 (42,5)	46 (57,5)	

* p<0,005

It was found that 100% of the participants (n=81) smoked cigarettes, the mean number of cigarettes smoked was 20.45±1.99, the minimum number of cigarettes smoked was 1 and the maximum number of cigarettes smoked was 28.

When analysing the number of hospitalisations of the participants, 88.4% (n=425) were first, 8.9% (n=43) second, 1.5% (n=7) third, 0.8% (n=4) fourth, 0.2% (n=1) fifth and 0.2% (n=1) seventh hospitalisations. The mean length of hospital stay was 11.57±8.07 days, with a minimum of 0 days (same day discharge) and a maximum of 41 days.
When analysing the participants in terms of penalty points received, it was found that 92.5% (n=445) received no penalty points, 7.5% (n=36) received penalty points, the mean penalty point received was 22.08±18.41, the minimum penalty point received was 10 and the maximum penalty point received was 110.

Discussion

In our study, which aims to examine the socio-demographic data of the patients who applied to the AMATEM clinic of Kayseri State Hospital in 2019, as well as to evaluate them according to the forensic case status, which has a gap in the literature, and to share them with the scientific world, it is seen that the male gender is dominant when looking at the gender distribution of the total participants. This dominance is seen to be 96% male and 4% female. It is seen that the results of the data we obtained are compatible with the results of other studies conducted in our country; namely Karaağaç et al. (2017), Bulut et al. (2006) and Mutlu et al. (2019) (3,4,5).

When analysing the Turkey 2020 Drug Report, it was found that 93.9% of the patients who received inpatient treatment in 2019 were male, 6.1% were female and the average age of the patients applying for treatment was 28.02. When analysing the distribution of patients by age group, it can be seen that the patients applying for treatment are concentrated in the 20-29 age group. The ratio of patients in the 20-29 age group to the total number of patients was 57.1%. Looking at the age of first use of the substance among inpatients, it can be seen that use is concentrated in the 15-24 age group. It was observed that the proportion of clients in the 15-24 age group was 66% of all clients and the average age of first use was 21.63 years (6). As stated in the results section of our study, 96% (n=462) of the participants were male, 4% (n=19) were female and the mean age was 32.12±10.25 years. In this context, the data obtained in our study support the findings of the research.

In 2019, when analysing the educational status of the patients receiving treatment, 1.8% had never attended school, 88.2% had 1-8 years of education, 6.3% had 9-12 years of education and 1.3% were university graduates. In 2019, when the employment status of the patients receiving treatment was analysed, 20.1% were unemployed, 40.2% did not have a regular job, 34.4% had a regular job and 2.5% were students (6). As 2.7% of the participants in our study were students, the result we obtained shows compatibility.

According to the European Drug Report (2019), 29 % of the 96 million adult population (aged 15-64) in the European Union are estimated to have tried illicit drugs at some point in their lives. Drug use experience was more common among men (57.8 million) than women (38.3 million). The most commonly used drugs were cannabis (55.4 million males and 36.1 million females), cocaine (12.4 million males and 5.7 million females), MDMA (9.3 million males and 4.6 million females) and amphetamines (8.3 million males and 4.1 million females) (7). In our study, the most commonly used illicit drug is cannabis.

The results obtained from the data in our study showed a high degree of consistency when compared with the European Drug Report, which was conducted at the international level, and the Turkish Drug Report, which was conducted at the national level. This may indicate that our sample is highly representative of the population. In Gündüz's (2020) master's thesis entitled Experiences of Individuals Treated in AMATEM Clinic in the Treatment Process and Requirements After Discharge (8), The 76 participants diagnosed with alcohol or drug dependence were young adults, male, single and heroin users, the average age of drug users was significantly lower than that of alcohol users and the majority of participants were secondary school graduates. In this context, the majority of the 481 participants in our study were male, the use of synthetic cannabis and heroin was relatively high, and most participants were secondary school graduates.

In Kamil and Tuncay's (2020) study of 140 out of 489 drug users, 9.3 % of the participants were women (13 people) and 90.7 % were men (127 people). It was thought that 50% of the participants (70 people) were secondary school graduates, 79.3% of the participants (111 people) used cannabis the most, and the reason for this was thought to be "due to misinformation or belief that cannabis is not addictive" (9). As a result of this study, a significant difference was found between the frequency of substance use and gender, and a very high degree of statistical significance was found between substance use and judicial case registration. In this context, a very high degree of significance was found in the relationship between substance use and forensic case, which is one of the main themes of our study. The results of our study confirm that the majority of participants were male, that secondary school graduates were more likely to use substances and that cannabis use was more common.

Similarly, a study conducted in nine provinces to determine the prevalence of tobacco, alcohol and drug use among primary and secondary school students found that the use of alcohol, volatile and illicit substances was higher among males (10). In a study of university students, smoking, alcohol and drug experience was found to be higher in males than in females (11).

In a study conducted at Dicle University, 108 out of 123 participants used cannabis (12), In another study, when the rate of cannabis use was examined by gender, it was found that the rate of cannabis use was higher among men (13). The ease of access to cannabis in our country may be the reason for this situation compared to Kamil and Tuncay's (2020) comment that "cannabis use is due to the misinformation or belief that cannabis is not addictive".

The main limitations are that the design of our study was retrospective and the data were obtained on a self-report basis. Another limitation is that no comparison was made with the control group and the data obtained included only inpatients with a diagnosis of substance use disorder. The aim of this study is to investigate the socio-demographic characteristics of drug addiction patients undergoing inpatient treatment at Kayseri State Hospital, Kayseri Province, using a retrospective analysis method, and to make the data available to the scientific community. Analysing the patients concerned in terms of clinical characteristics and treatment methods applied is of great importance in the prevention and treatment of these diseases, which are becoming increasingly common in society. As there are a limited number of studies in the literature on the subject we studied, it is believed that our study will contribute to cumulative knowledge. Conducting studies in this area, which is lacking, will be a guide for both the scientific world and individuals working in the field.

The fact that our study was conducted in a 300-bed hospital with a B role in the province of Kayseri may indicate that a partially small sample was selected. Although this situation is the limitation of the study, it may be the essence of the study as it is a generalisable situation within the framework of scientific research techniques. However, it can be recommended to the researchers to carry out the study with a larger sample group in a descriptive, cross-sectional approach and to reveal the socio-demographic characteristics of AMATEM patients.

The study conducted by Gürbüz and Şahin (2018) using the snowball method (14), which is one of the non-probabilistic techniques, stresses the importance of using the social environment of each patient who comes to the AMATEM unit and is diagnosed with drug addiction, and the importance of applying social rehabilitation and addiction treatment in patient groups formed with the addicts. This is because it is believed that the high level of honesty, reality and shyness in environments such as family, friends and work groups, which are the necessities of being human, will contribute to the treatment process. The examination of the participants in our study in terms of forensic case records emphasises the necessity and importance of considering the environment and the case. Our study highlights the need for a holistic perspective by considering forensic, social and demographic characteristics together in the treatment and rehabilitation of addiction.

Although the analysis of socio-demographic characteristics of inpatients with substance dependence according to their forensic case status is the core of our study, a review of the literature revealed that there are not enough studies examining socio-demographic characteristics in relation to forensic cases in addicted patients. In this context, it is believed that studies with a larger sample size will be of great benefit to the scientific community.

Declarations

Funding: The present study was not funded by any corporation.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Ethics Approval: Since the data of our study, which we think will shed light on the literature, covers the year 2019, ethics committee permission was not obtained in accordance with the decision dated February 25, 2020 published by ULAKBIM. However, research permission was obtained from the hospital where the study was conducted. We thank our esteemed editors for their efforts.

Availability of Data and Material

All data is available

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