

Perceived social support as a mediating variable for post-traumatic stress disorder in traffic accident victims

الدعم الاجتماعي كمتغير وسيط لاضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لدى ضحايا حوادث المرور

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Abstract:

The current study aims to reveal the relationship of perceived social support to post-traumatic stress disorder among traffic accident victims. We also attempt to clarify the role of traffic accident victims' perception of the psychological and social intervention provided by the social media network.

The level of post-traumatic stress disorder will be initially detected in victims of serious traffic accidents that caused permanent impairments that reached the point of disability. Then, the perceived social support scale was applied.

The study concluded that there is a relationship between perceived social support and post-traumatic stress disorder among traffic accident victims with permanent

Keywords: perceived social support, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), victim, handicap, traffic accident victims.

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الملخص:

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى الكشف عن علاقة المساندة الاجتماعية المدركة باضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لدى ضحايا الحوادث المرورية، وكذا توضيح دور إدراك ضحايا الحوادث المرورية للتدخل النفسي والاجتماعي الذي توفره شبكة التواصل الاجتماعي.

سيتم الكشف مبدئياً عن مستوى اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لدى ضحايا حوادث المرور الخطيرة التي تسببت في عاهات دائمة وصلت إلى حد الإعاقة الحركية، ويتم هذا الكشف باستخدام مقياس اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة التابع لـ *CIDI*، وهو عبارة عن مجموعة من المقاييس المصممة في غزة والمكيفة في المجتمع الجزائري، ومن ثم يتم تطبيق مقياس الدعم الاجتماعي المدرك.

توصلت الدراسة إلى وجود علاقة بين المساندة الاجتماعية المدركة واضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لدى ضحايا الحوادث المرورية من ذوي الإعاقات الدائمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: دعم اجتماعي، اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة، ضحية، إعاقة، حوادث المرور.

- Introduction

Traffic accidents have multiplied recently in a very noticeable way in all countries of the world, especially Algeria, which has become at the forefront of countries where the victims of these accidents are increasing day after day, due to population density, the large number of vehicles of all types, and the lack of respect for traffic laws, whether by drivers or pedestrians. As well as excessive driving speed, and other factors that often cause painful, if not fatal, traffic accidents. Sometimes the vehicle owner is guilty, sometimes a victim, and sometimes there are material losses with minor injuries, and sometimes serious ones.

These accidents from which all segments of society, young and old, are not spared, and which occur at every point in the world and every second of time, which may make a healthy person a cripple, or a person with a permanent disability. No matter how advanced the field of medicine is, it fails in many ways. It is often difficult to help victims of traffic accidents recover completely and return to their normal state as was the case before the accident occurred. There is no doubt that there is a significant number of these victims who have permanent effects of traffic accidents on them. Which may cause them great distress and anxiety because they were not born with these disabilities or impairments, which generates various negative feelings in them towards themselves. It is also difficult to accept the matter and live without thinking about the issue, which deprives them of the sweetness of life, especially in the youth stage, where Ambitions are at their peak.

There are many forms of accidents, including accidents that may occur between a vehicle and another vehicle, or they may occur as a result of the vehicle colliding with a person or an object, such as light poles on the roads. There are many and multiple causes of traffic accidents, including excessive speed, and they may be due to the driver being busy with many things, such as eating, drinking, or talking on the phone. Cellular, and the psychological aspect also plays a role in traffic accidents. A person may be angry or stressed and cannot drive the car properly. In order to identify the factors that lead to reducing traffic accident rates, we must realize that driving a car is an art and a taste that governs it just as it governs other human behaviors. Rules and regulations, and if driving a car deviates from this framework, it becomes an instrument of death at the hands of ignorant people who do not care about the value of a person and his right to life.

1- The problematic of the study

The developments taking place in all areas of human life have led to a change in many matters related to him and his life compared to what they were in the past, and one of the most important of these changes is the emergence of advanced and modern means of transportation, as many vehicles appeared that humans use to move from one place to another, And its ability to provide all his needs and requirements with ease. Hardly a home is devoid of means of transportation of all kinds, as it has become difficult for any person to move from one place to another except by using his own means of transportation or another public means, and with this great increase in the numbers of these means. These methods have led to a significant increase in traffic accidents.

The Arab Organization for Traffic Safety presents terrifying numbers about traffic accidents in the Arab world, leaving forty thousand dead annually, 85 percent of which are the result of human errors, and that drivers' behaviors are responsible for 73 percent of them, 4 percent of which are the responsibility of bad weather conditions, and 2 percent. 7% is due to rough and unsafe roads, and the mobile phone has a 6% share as a result of its use while driving (Al-Fariqi, 2016).

Algeria, like the rest of the countries of the world, has known a huge spread of traffic accidents, as Algeria ranks third in the world in terms of the number of deaths in traffic accidents. Road terrorism has claimed 37,000 deaths in the last 10 years. The National Gendarmerie services in the various states of the country have recorded the deaths of more than 37,000. people since 2001 due to traffic accidents. In February 2017, 32 people were killed and 1,029 others were injured in 959 traffic accidents, despite awareness-raising campaigns and punitive measures represented in withdrawing driving licenses (Statistics of the National Gendarmerie Directorate, Algeria, 2017).

Injuries resulting from road traffic accidents cause enormous economic losses to victims, their families and to countries in general. These losses arise from the costs of treatment (including rehabilitation and accident investigation), reduced/lost productivity (wages) of those who die or are disabled due to their injuries, and the productivity of the family members involved. Those who have to miss work (or school) to care for the infected.

Traffic accidents are classified as stressful events, and researchers in psychology have made great efforts to track the effects resulting from these events on a person's psychological, mental, and physical health. It is logical that the impact of traffic accidents varies with the degree of damage resulting from those accidents, but whatever the impact resulting from Stressful life events are limited, but they have effects on the psychological, mental and physical health of the human individual(Butler, 1999).

After exposure to traffic accidents, the reaction of those affected is psychological and behavioral, expressing the immediate impact of the event as well as the type of personal confrontation with it. Among these psychological expressions we find feelings and signs of confusion, and even disconnection from the surroundings, anxiety and panic, sadness and depression, and signs of various and different emotional and behavioral pressures. All of these symptoms are known in the context of an acute reaction to stress. Later, after hours and days, more traumatic symptoms may appear. It is clear that these symptoms embody an attempt to psychologically confront the difficult traumatic experience, and therefore it is acceptable to define them in the early stage as "Healthy responses to an unhealthy situation." In general, there is a gradual improvement and the symptoms begin to decline and disappear. However, these symptoms remain and persist in some cases, and when post-traumatic symptoms persist for more than a month, they are identified and treated as a "chronic condition." It is important to point out here that post-traumatic stress disorder may appear without previous indications of acute stress symptoms, as mentioned, and in In uncommon cases, the disorder may erupt even months after the traumatic event, and then it is called "post-traumatic stress disorder" PTSD.

Most people cope with the traumatic experience successfully and do not develop psychological illness. Therefore, we find it difficult to determine the percentage of people who develop post-traumatic stress disorder, given that it is linked to different population groups and to the point in time that follows the occurrence of the explosive agent, for example, around the time of a traffic accident. In the group that was exposed to it, a large number equivalent to tens of percent may develop symptoms. This percentage decreases over time, especially in the first months after the event. Despite this, a small group remains infected with the disorder on an ongoing and chronic basis.

In this regard, the study of Al-Ateq (2001) in Cairo, entitled “The psychological trauma associated with children’s exposure and injury to road accidents in the Arab Republic of Egypt, indicates that children injured in road accidents suffering from PTSD recorded low scores on the psychological adjustment scale and did not have methods to cope with stressful situations(Al-Atiq, 2011).

Post-traumatic stress disorder and the psychological problems that accompany it affect family life in multiple ways and on several levels, as individuals affected by trauma face difficulty in expressing their feelings, which makes their partners feel rejected and unaccepted, which creates a feeling of isolation in them, and it is also difficult for them to engage. In intimate and warm relationships with their partners, their symptoms of anxiety, depression, guilt, and inadequacy worsen, which increases the difficulty of communicating with their partner, and the relationship between them turns into a relationship full of pain.

The current study aims to reveal the level of post-traumatic stress disorders in an individual who was exposed to a traffic accident and was seriously injured that left a physical and psychological impact on him. We also try to determine the possibility of differences between those exposed to traffic accidents of both sexes, given that each person has his own personal structure and demographic circumstances, and that the psychological and biological composition It differs between males and females. We are also working to search for differences in traumatic reactions and the level of post-traumatic stress disorder according to different age groups and which group shows the most severe symptoms, by answering the following question:

-Is there a relationship between perceived social support and post-traumatic stress disorder for traffic accident victims with permanent disabilities?

2- Study hypothesis

-Is there a relationship between perceived social support and post-traumatic stress disorder for traffic accident victims with permanent disabilities

3- The importance of the study

The importance of the current study lies in:

* Highlighting an important group in Algerian society whose number is on the rise as a result of the astonishing increase in traffic accidents

in recent years, which makes those suffering from psychological pressure and bad psychological effects destined to increase, and they must be studied in order to be able to find means of support in all physical and psychological aspects...

*PTSD disorder is a contemporary disorder, and no research organization in any country is devoid of studies about it, as traumatic events have witnessed horrific activity in society, such as natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, and human disasters such as wars, terrorism, and traffic accidents. This psychological disorder is considered the most devastating form of mental illness. For the patient's psyche and his social relationship, therefore, his study is of societal and international importance that should not be neglected.

*Perceived psychological and social support as a mediating change capable of alleviating post-traumatic symptoms among those exposed to traffic accidents.

4- Study concepts

4-1- Post-traumatic stress disorder

*** Terminologically:**

The Fourth Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (IV-DSM), based on the American Psychiatric Association, provides a definition of the disorder as follows: It is a category of anxiety disorders, where the individual is exposed to an unusual psychological or physical stressful event, sometimes immediately after exposure to it. In other cases, not before three months or more after exposure to those pressures.

***Procedurally:**

It is the score obtained by an individual involved in a traffic accident as a result of applying Davidson's PTSD scale.

4-2- Traffic accidents:

Every road accident arises as a result of a violation, for some reason, of the mutual action of the system that brings together drivers and cars, weather conditions, and road conditions (Al-Awfi, 2006).

Perceived social support:

Cohen et al (1986) define social support as meaning the individual's requirements for support and support from the environment surrounding him, whether from individuals or groups, that alleviate the stressful life events to which he is exposed, and which enable him to participate effectively socially in facing these events and adapting to them. Sarah Son et al. define Sarason (1986) means that the individual feels that there are some people close to him and whom he trusts to stand by him when needed, and it is of two types:

Recipient: This is the available support.

Perceived: It is individuals' awareness of this support(Sarason, 1986).

***Procedurally:**

It is traffic victims' perception of the support and care provided to them by their social network represented by parents, a spouse, friends, or any member of their surroundings, and it is the degree that traffic accident victims obtain on the perceived social support scale emerging from CIDI. (Mental Health Battery) for the population)

The current study:

• Study methodology:

Because the information obtained is digital data that needs statistical analysis, the most appropriate approach for our study was the descriptive, correlational approach, which is the best for studying the relationship between the two variables of the study, namely perceived social support and post-traumatic stress disorder.

• Study sample: 50

• Study tools: The primary instrument used for the study is the Population Mental Health Inventory, Composite international diagnostic-interview(CIDI).

It is a battery that was used in Gaza and was legalized in Algerian society by the Algerian Society for Psychological Research (SARP).

We used the following metrics:

-Diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder: Section K PTSD

In accordance with the standards of the World Health Organization (OMS) and the classification of the American Psychiatric Society (DSM), an interview was developed and translated from English into Arabic.

After the aforementioned scale was applied, which revealed the life events that the individual experienced, we focus on the traumatic events and try to detect through the individual's response to these traumatic events.

-Social support:

It aims to measure the current size of the social network of the sample members. The social network is represented by the number of people that the individual can rely on in the event of a crisis, and they are family members, including parents, wife, children, friends, or any other people.

-Statistical processing tools:

To transcribe the obtained data, we relied on a set of statistical tools used by the statistical analysis program SPSS package. These tools are: Chi sq test - arithmetic mean - standard deviation - T test

• Study results:

Table 1: Results of the t-test for mean differences in post-traumatic stress disorder

Significance level	T value	standard deviation	SMA	the number	the sample
0.05	1.34	6.12	8.16	25	1
		3.32	3.45	25	2

The previous table shows that there are differences in the means between the two samples with regard to post-traumatic stress disorders, and this is also shown by the value of T, which is considered statistically significant at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, and through this we say that:

A sample of individuals who were exposed to traffic accidents and had high perceived social support were less likely to suffer from post-

traumatic stress disorder than those who were exposed to accidents and had low perceived social support.

• **Analysis:**

As proven by the results of the study, there is a direct relationship between the amount of perceived social support and the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder. The higher the perceived social support, the lower the PTSD, and the more severe the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is evidence that the perceived social support is low.

This is consistent with the study by Fickel, Morgelai et al. (2005), which they conducted on a sample of those exposed to traffic accidents and concluded that young age groups are more susceptible to post-traumatic stress disorder, and psychological trauma associated with traffic accidents can occur at any age stage, but it occurs in young groups. More severe than other categories, and the reason is the personality traits of each category and their ability to adapt to traumatic situations, and the presence of support from those around them would reduce the severity of their post-traumatic symptoms.

Through the results of our study and the results of Fickel's study, we see the importance and great role that perceived social support plays in alleviating the symptoms of psychological trauma to which victims of various types of accidents are exposed. The better the individual is aware of the support he receives from those around him, especially his family members, the more capable he is of facing pressures. And overcome them, as people who live in a family atmosphere dominated by love, attention and care and are well aware of this are less susceptible to psychological disorders in all their forms and are the most resilient and capable people to face the troubles of life with its various degrees of cruelty.

Therefore, in many therapeutic programs, social support is considered the most important step that the therapist works to create between the individual and his social network so that he is psychologically fortified and able to face life pressures and challenge the difficulties that he may experience.

- General summary

The primary goal of the study was to search for the relationship of perceived social support to reducing the degree of post-traumatic stress disorder among victims of traffic accidents. To do this, we used the social support measure and chose a sample of 50 cases, half of whom had high social support and half of whom had low social support. Then we applied the social support measure. PTSD, and we found that there were statistically significant differences in the degree of the disorder compared to the two samples in favor of the sample that had high perceived social support.

Therefore, social support is considered an essential source of security that a person needs in his life when he feels that there is something threatening his security and safety, and when he feels that his energy has been exhausted and that he needs support and assistance, so he resorts to his social network and the security it can provide him with which he can face life again. Those who have been involved in traffic accidents are in dire need of any kind of social support to continue their lives, which in their view have been blackened by scenes of blood and devastation.

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