

Original

**PROFILE OF PSYCHIATRIC ADMISSIONS FOLLOWING
POLICE REFERRAL IN BAHRAIN**

Omaima M Saleh, MB BCh, DPM* Mohammed K Al-Haddad,
MB BCh, FRC Psych**

Reginald P Sequeira, PhD***

This is a retrospective study of patients admitted via the police to the Psychiatric Hospital in Bahrain during 1989. A high percentage of police admissions were unemployed, single males in their twenties or thirties. They mostly suffered from schizophrenia or substance abuse problems and were arrested because of their abnormal behavior or being violent. Comparison of these results with corresponding studies in the developed and developing world showed consistency in the demographic data, and causes for the police involvement. The diagnostic categories differed only in their order of frequency from that in the developed countries.

Police admissions to psychiatric hospitals have been a focus of attention for many investigators, especially by those who advocate a social control hypothesis in relation to psychiatry, where the hospital is viewed as an agent of the authority helping to exert control over those individuals labelled by the society as "psychiatrically abnormal"¹.

Some studies have examined the possibility that high rates of police admissions may partly be affected by conscious or unconscious racist attitudes². Other investigations concluded that patients reaching treatment facilities via the police are amongst the most acutely disturbed admission who comes from decaying parts of large cities and who are lonely, isolated and coming from minority communities³.

This study aims at identifying the characteristics of police admissions in Bahrain, with respect to:

1. Events leading to admissions of the patients by the police,
2. The socio-demographic characteristics of these patients,
3. Psychiatric diagnosis in frequency of occurrence.
4. The nature of police related admissions as compared to other parts of the world.