Homicidal Deaths Analysis in Two Egyptian Governorates (Gharbia and Qalubia): A Five-Year Retrospective Comparative Study (2006-2010)

Eslam S. Metwally, M.D.* and Abdelmonem G. Madboly, M.D.*
*Forensic Medicine & Clinical Toxicology Department, Benha University, Egypt

Email: islam.mitwalli@fmed.bu.edu.eg
Email: abdelmonem.algohari@fmed.bu.edu.eg

Abstract

Violent deaths are examined to determine the cause and the manner of death. Homicidal victims referred to the two governorates departments of forensic medicine during a 5-year period from 2006 to 2010 were studied. Data of homicidal deaths was obtained from available medicolegal reports and statistically analyzed. The total number of postmortem examinations was 3235 in Gharbia, and 4233 in Qalubia; of these 9.2% and 8.8% were homicidal deaths respectively. The total incidence rate of homicidal deaths per 100,000 populations in Gharbia was (0.0092) and in Qalubia was (0.0088). The highest incidence of crimes in the two governorates occurred during summer months (41.4-48%), among family members (37.4-40.4%), took place outdoor (62.6-64.4%), and was among males (77.1-75.7%) in the age group 31-40 years (25.3-25.9%). Urban areas accounted for 61.5% in Gharbia and 68.2% in Qalubia. Victims were commonly unemployed in Gharbia (24.6%), while they were workers in Qalubia (24%). Sharp, blunt and firearm weapons were commonly used in the two governorates. Stabbing was the most common cause of death in both Gharbia and Qalubia (40.7-45%), and commonly occurred among males. Burn was more common among females while asphyxia was equally distributed in the two governorates. Defense wounds were recorded in 32.7% of homicidal deaths in Gharbia and 21% in Qalubia. In conclusion, the pattern of homicide in the two governorates was very similar.

Keywords: homicide, analysis, Gharbia, Qalubia, Egypt

INTRODUCTION

Homicidal crimes are as old as the existence of human civilization. Since time immemorial revenge, family feuds, anger, jealousy and other personal motives have been the precipitating causes for murder (Chattopadhyay & Sukul, 2013). Homicide is an undesirable facet of the civilized society. Medical examiners have long recognized homicide-related trauma as one of the major public health problems of the world (Menezes et al., 2009).
Homicide is defined as the killing of one human-being by the act, procurement, or omission another; the term applies to all such killings whether criminal or not (Koehler & Brown, 2010). There has been a global increase in homicide, it causes over than 500,000 deaths per year worldwide (UNODC, 2011). The homicide statistics varies from country to country and region to region (Edirisinghe & Kitulwatte, 2009).

The patterns of homicide are useful indicators of the social stresses in a community (Nadanovsky & Cunha-Cruz, 2009). Study of the homicidal pattern in a society is one of the first steps in developing strategies to prevent it (Murad et al., 2006). Homicidal patterns can also provide valuable baseline information for other comparative studies as well as for monitoring of socio-pathological trends in the studied community (Bhupinde et al., 2010).

Gharbia and Qalubia are two Egyptian governorates situated at the middle of Nile delta with a population of 4,439,000 and 4,754,000 respectively (CAPMAS, 2012). The main population activity in Gharbia governorate is manufacturing, it is famous for its textile factories. Qalubia governorate is known for both agricultural and manufacturing population activity (Wikipedia, 2013).

There is an under-estimation of homicidal patterns in Egypt; few studies are available about the homicidal rate - based on the population number - and other characteristics of homicidal deaths. Therefore, this study was undertaken to determine and compare the pattern of homicidal deaths in Gharbia and Qalubia governorates.