

The diagnostic validity of panic disorder : Anxiety, depression or a separate entity

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The aim of this study was to analyze the inter-relationship of panic, anxiety and depression disorders via an examination of comorbidity, and to study the relation of panic disorder to either anxiety or depression or it may constitute a separate entity. The study was conducted on four groups of Egyptian patients, each contained thirty subjects from psychological medicine hospital in Kuwait, a private hospital in Cairo or referrals from state clinics. The four groups were panic disorder, major depressive disorder, GAD and controls. They were subjected to present state examination (PSE), Eysenck personality questionnaire (EPQ), Hamilton anxiety scale (HAS), scale of Guilford inventory of personality factors, Beck depression inventory (BDI) and dexamethasone suppression test, and electrocardiography (ECG). The study revealed that some aspects were found to be more common between panic disorder and GAD, while others were more frequently observed between panic disorder and depression. There were no definite findings which outweigh one of these relations than the other. The clinical course and the symptom profile of panic disorder justify its existence as an independent diagnostic category.