

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Comorbid Depression in a West African Population

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Despite the established relationship between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression in Western cultures, research concerning the prevalence rates and relationship between the comorbid disorders in Non-Western communities remains sparse. The present study explored the relationship between PTSD and comorbid depression in citizens currently living in Ghana, West Africa. Ghanaian Nationals ($n=140$) completed the PTSD and demographic sections of the Structured Clinical Interview for the DSM-IV (SCID-I), as well as the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D). Both measures were administered through interview format. Results revealed a lower prevalence rate of PTSD than expected. Further analysis demonstrated that meeting the diagnostic criteria for PTSD increased the chance of meeting the diagnostic criteria for depression, as well as increased depression scores. To confirm that the prevalence rates found in this study were reflective of actual cases of depression (not measurement error) a scale reliability analysis was conducted on the CES-D. The results of this analysis confirmed internal consistency. Results suggest that although the prevalence rate of PTSD was low, a relationship is present between the

disorders in a non-Western sample. The reliability of the measures means that PTSD and depression were assessed for, but what is not certain is whether the actual construct of the disorders could occur differently in a non-Western sample, causing a different presentation of symptoms. Future research is needed to examine the Western construct of PTSD and depression to determine if there is a different presentation of symptoms not accounted for by Western measures.