Disability & Deafness in North East Africa

Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia

Introduction and Bibliography, mainly non–medical, with historical material and some annotation

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For a list of abbreviations used in this document, consult the glossary.

Egypt and Sudan (post 1955)


ABDEL–FATTAH, Mahmoud A. (2005) Arabic Sign Language: a perspective. J. Deaf Studies and Deaf Education 10 (2) 212–221. Discussion of Arabic Sign Languages (ARSL) from a comparative linguistic point of view, illuminating some of the unity and diversity currently found in perceptions of ARSL and their everyday practice across the Arab world. (Brief mention of some Egyptian Sign Language signs).


ABOLOU, Cosmas A. (2000) Co–ordination of services setting training of Mid–Level Rehabilitation Workers (MLWRs) and Community Based Rehabilitation Workers (CBRWs) and a resource centre for the State Ministry of Social and Cultural Affairs, Bahr El Jebel State, and the Norwegian Association of the Disabled (NAD), Juba, Southern Sudan. Unpubl. CBR action plan, CICH, Institute of Child Health, London. 37 pp.


BAASHER T (1963) The new medical graduate and mental health. *Sudan MJ* 2 (1) 10–. Need and efforts to inculcate basic notions of mental health treatment and care in initial training of generalist physicians in Sudan in the 1960s.


BADRI M.B. (1972) Customs, traditions and psychopathology. *Sudan MJ* 10 (3) #.


CEDERBLAD, Marianne (1968) A Child Psychiatric Study on Sudanese Arab Children. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, Supplement 200, pp. 1–230. Book length social psychiatric survey of 1716 children aged three to fifteen years (899 boys, 817 girls) in three villages near Khartoum, Sudan. A more intensive study was done on a sample of 197 (113 boys, 84 girls) Coverage was given to socio–anthropological background, somatic health situation, survey of mental conditions and psychosomatic symptoms, various kinds of behavioural disturbance, mental retardation (pp. 182–87), and psychological testing, with discussion. Five case histories appear of children judged to be "probably imbecile" or "probably idiot" (pp. 183–84).


EGYPT. (See also UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC).


FAHMY M. (1964) Initial exploring of the intelligence of Shilluk children. *Vita Humana* 7: 164–.
Testing children in Southern Sudan.


Early survey among 15,519 school children.


Studies on childrearing practices, female circumcision, and services for disabled children.


Amidst Jacobsen's lengthy and detailed medical anthropological study, some Beja cultural ideas of disability and therapies are embedded, e.g. pp. 59–73, 128–129, on (what might appear to biomedically trained Europeans as) epilepsy, various mental or psychological afflictions; bone-setting and other healing.


Biography of Taha Husayn, with reference also to blindness in literature


In this global study, pp. 131–37 cover goitre reported in Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, French and British Somaliland, with references from 1905 to 1958 (p. 224).


Also listed below in 1601–1955 section, with notes on historical material.


Study on non–institutionalised individuals from Bahrain, Burma, DPR Korea, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia.

LANDMINE Monitor Report 2004. SUDAN.
Carefully compiled and annually updated report, including sections on "Landmine Casualties," "Survivor Assistance," and "Disability Policy and Practice" (the last being very brief).


Senior Sudanese psychiatrist, recommending decentralised mental health services for Sudan as part of basic health care, rather than building mental hospitals.


Validated for functional disability by use with patients in Egypt, Sudan and five other Arab countries.
The continuation is noted, from antiquity to the present, of a healing ministry within the Coptic Church, wherein people with various physical and mental impairments are healed by the prayers and actions of holy persons; or by their faith in the efficacy of the saint's relics to evoke the power of God; or via some other theological construction (pp. 97–110). One example of a healing shrine is titled "The Lourdes in the Desert: Saint Menas" (pp. 151–54), situated about 50 miles southwest of Alexandria. (See GODRON, below).

pp. 33–34 concern the situation of deaf people in Egypt, as reported by the national organisation.


Based in Sudan. Differentiates some traditional views and practices found in Muslim–majority countries, from the orthodox Islamic teaching based on a few verses in the Qur'an and sayings of the prophet Muhammad.


Hearing tests were conducted on 196 primary school pupils. The school environment was studied for noise level and crowding. Impairments were found among 24% (by audiometry) and 36% (tympanometry). Half the children with audimetric loss were reported by teachers as poor achievers.

Concerned with mental retardation in Egypt.
Ch. 4, "Health, disability, and poverty."

Lists 90 items on Zar in Arabic (transliterated) from 1880 onward, and also 24 items in other languages.

Includes some discussion of Sudan child disability.


Follow–up visit after KRAUS (1953) noting modest developments along community–based lines.


Based on needs revealed in a study of Cairo households living in poverty. The Social Aid programme aims to provide income support to people such as the elderly, widows, disabled people, who have no means of self–support. The study suggests some shortcomings in the scheme.


Includes material from Ethiopia, Sudan.


Screening of 6750 schoolchildren aged 8–10. Goitre prevalence rate of 34.6%.

Studies comparing developmental and family outcomes of three programs for young children with mental retardation in the slums of Cairo and Alexandria. The programs were a Community Based Rehabilitation project, an Outreach project with trained professionals, and a project based at a Mother and Child Health centre.


London: Ithaca.


Concerned with blind entertainers in Egypt


Medical/audiological work in Egypt.


Studies in Egypt showed no positive results of acupuncture with 23 patients having sensorineural hearing loss.

Random sample of 3,000 urban & rural subjects; 116 cases of mental retardation, prevalence of 3.9%; with 65% parental consanguinity.


Though mainly concerned with Tunisia, there are useful sections on development of services and deaf organisations in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and the United Arab Emirates.


Country summaries include: Egypt (pp. 42–44).

Country summaries include: Egypt (98–100).


Published March 1971. Also available on ERIC Ed 060238. English-language abstract, providing outline of legal status and extent of special education in the United Arab Republic.

Part I, Popular Medical Practice (pp. 217–220, refs pp. 227–28) has Valsik as first author. (See HUSSIEN, above, for parts II and III).


Bibliography with some North East African material.

