

"Self-Concept" Consideration Related to War Captivity for Iraqi Former Prisoners of Iraq-Iran War 1980-1988

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الخلاصة:

بدأت هذه الدراسة الوصفية من الرابع من حزيران عام ٢٠٠٦ وانجزت في الخامس عشر من أيلول ٢٠٠٦ الهدف: لمعرفة مفهوم الذات عند الأسرى العراقيين العائدين وكيف ينظروا أنفسهم بعد العودة وأيضا أيجاد العلاقة بين هذا المفهوم وبعض المتغيرات. المنهجية: جمعت عينة البحث بالطريقة التصادفية لـ ٣٠٠ أسير عائد من الذين كانوا يزورون وزارة الصحة، وزارة حقوق الإنسان. ولغرض جمع المعلومات لهذا البحث فقد صممت الاستبانة والتي تكونت من بابين: الأول: المعلومات الديموغرافية وتضمنت على سنة فقرات والثاني تضمن ثلاثة عشر سؤالا لمعرفة مفهوم الذات عند العائدين. وقد حدد الثبات والمصادقية لتلك الاستبانة بطريقة الدراسة المصغرة والخبراء وباستخدام الاستبانة وبطريقة المقابلة فقد جمعت البيانات الخاصة بالبحث بعدها فقد أجري التحليل لتلك البيانات وأستخدم في هذه العملية التحليل الإحصائي الوصفي (التكرار، النسبة المئوية والتحليل الإحصائي التبايني (الاستنتاجي) (معامل النتائج أو وضحت الدراسة بأن (٦٦.٥%) الأسرى العائدين يمتلكون مستوى يتراوح بين عالي ومتوسط بالنسبة لمفهوم الذات. وأظهرت الدراسة أيضا إلى وجود علاقة معنوية عالية بين مفهوم الذات والتحصيل الدراسي و علاقة معنوية مع فترة الأسيرة العمر الأسرة الرتبة العسكرية وتاريخ العودة التوصيات توصي الدراسة إلى تكثيف الجهود من خلال المراكز الخاصة بالأسرى العائدين للعمل على دعم وإعادة الثقة بأنفسهم وبالمجتمع ليتسنى العودة السريعة وديمومة صحة هذه الشريحة والعمل على مواصلة تقديم الخدمات الطبية والنفسية والإرشاد الارتباط الاجتماعي لهم.

Abstract:

This descriptive study had begun from June 4th, 2006 and finished on September 15, 2006.

Purpose: To know the changes in self-concept amongst Iraqi former prisoners of Iraq-Iran war, and the relationship with certain variables.

Methodology: The sample was collected accidentally of 300 Iraqi former prisoners of war (POW) who were visiting: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Human rights. For collecting the information for this study, a questionnaire was constructed, this constructed questionnaire consisted of two parts: firstly, demographic data, which consists of six items and secondly; (13 items) which through them, we determine the self-concept in repatriates. Reliability and validity for this questionnaire were determined through the pilot study and the experts. Data were collected through using the questionnaire and by the interview technique. Data were analyzed by the application of descriptive statistical analysis, which were; percentages, frequencies, and inferential statistic analysis (Pearson correlation coefficient).

Result: The study disclosed that 66.5% of those repatriates have good and moderate levels for the self-concept, and the study disclosed also that there is a high significant relationship between the self- concept and, level of education and significant relationship with; duration of captivity, age at capture. military rank, and date of repatriation.

Recommendation: This study recommends concentrating efforts through the centers, for restoring the confidence within themselves and with the community to achieve a rapid return and to maintain the psychological, medical and social support.

Keywords: self-concept, Iraqi former prisoners, war captivity.

Introduction:

War is a conflict involving use of weapons and physical force by states or other large-scale groups, coinciding with a lack of dialogue between the parties War seems as old as society, and certainly features prominently in the recorded histories of state- cultures". Throughout history war has been the source of serious moral questions. although many ancient nations and some more modern ones viewed war as noble, over the sweep of history, concerns about the morality of war have gradually increased. Today, war is generally seen as undesirable and, by some, morally problematic, at the same time, many view war, or at least the preparation and

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readiness and willingness to engage in war, as necessary for the defense of their country(). Pacifists believe that war is inherently immoral and that no war should ever be fought, death, injury, and destruction of property, unexploded ordinance, destruction of works, of art, rape of women and children, environmental/Infrastructure damage, poverty, famine, diseases, negative psychological effects on individuals, drain on resources (economic, material, manpower, etc.), displacement of refugees/strain on surrounding states due to conflict, social upheaval, nations lose their innocence, extinction and endangerment of plants and animals are the results of war). The Iraq-Iran war took place in 1980 and finished in 1988; more than eighty thousands soldiers from Iraqi troop had been captured during this eight-year long war and were released between 1990 and 2003.

The study aims to determine the levels of 'self-concept' consideration among Iraqi former prisoners of Iraq-Iran war and to determine the relationship between these levels and some demographic characteristics of those repatriates such as; age at capture, duration of captivity, rank, marital status, level of education, and date of repatriation.

Methodology:

^ non-probability accidental sample of 300 repatriates who were visiting; Ministry of Human Rights / POWs, and Ministry of Health / Department of medical Committees. Data for this study were collected from June 4th to September 15th 2006. The constructed questionnaire as an instrument for data collection consists of two parts (Appendix A). Firstly; the Demographic data sheet which consists of (6) items which included; age at capture, marital status, military rank, level of education, duration of captivity, and date of repatriation, and secondly: 13 items, which measure the Self-concept, these items were measured, scored and rated of 3-level Likert rating scale "3" indicates that the status was (high) as (always), "2" indicates (moderate) as (sometimes), and "1" indicates (low) as (never). The rating scale was implicated to rate the frequency and extension of the 51145(3) Validity and reliability for the constructed questionnaire, were determined by using pilot study and the experts panel, and data were analyzed through the application of the descriptive data analysis (frequency, and percentage), and inferential data analysis (correlation coefficient, and quartiles)(.).

Results:

Table (1) Distribution of the Sample regarding to Demographic Characteristics.

Age at capture/ 8215	f	%	Duration of Captivity/years	f	O	Military Rank	f	%
14-21	82	27.3	2-5	26	8.7	Officer	23	7.7
22-29	133	44.3	6-9	87	29.0	Sub-officer	64	21.3
30-37	55	18.3	10-13	41	13.7	Reserved	65	21.7
38-45	17	5.7	14-17	62	20.7	Recruit	108	36.0
46-53	11	3.7	18-21	73	24.3	Public army	40	13.3
54	2	0.7	22	11	3.7			
Total	300	100.0	Total	300	100.0	Total	300	100.0
Marital Status	f	%	Level Of Education	f	O/	Date Of Repatriation	f	O
Married	172	57.3	Illiterate	33	11.0	1990-1992	104	34.7
Single	127	42.3	Read and write	31	10.3	1993-1995	19	6.3
Divorcee	1	0.3	Primary school	87	29.0	1996-1998	14	4.7
			Secondary school	98	32.7	1999-2001	49	16.3
			Diploma	14	4.7	2002	114	38.0
			Bachelor and postgraduate	37	12.3			
Total	300	100.0	100%	300	100.0	Total	300	100.0

This table shows that 44.3% of the repatriates were 22 to 29 years old at capture and 29.0%, 24.3%, and 20.7% of them had spent 6-9 years, 18-21 years, and 14-17 years in captivity respectively, and 36.0% were recruits. Regarding to their marital status 57.3% was married and 42.3% were singles. Most of them: (32.7 and 29.0%) were of secondary school and primary school respectively. Lastly, most of them 38.0% and 34.7% had been repatriated during 2002, and 1990 to 1992 respectively.

Table (2) Distribution of Self-concept levels regarding to Age at Capture.

Age at capture Years	Self-concept Levels							
	High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	f	%	f	O/	f	%	f	O
1-121	29	9.7	28	9.3	25	8.3	82	27.3
22-29	56	18.7	37	12.3	40	13.3	133	44.3
30-37	17	5.7	18	6.0	20	6.7	55	18.3
38-45	6	2.0	4	1.3	7	2.3	17	5.7
46-53	2	0.7	3	1.0	6	2.0	11	3.7
54	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.7	2	0.7
Total	110	36.7	90	30.0	100	33.3	300	100.0

This table shows that the highest percentage is 18.7% in age group 22-29 having high level of self-concept, and the lowest percentage is 0.7% in age group 54[^] year and 46-53 year having low and high level respectively.

Table (3) Distribution of Self-concept levels regarding to Marital Status.

Marital status	Self-concept Levels							
	High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Married	66	22.0	55	18.3	51	17.0	172	57.3
Single	44	14.7	35	11.7	48	16.0	127	42.3
Divorcee	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.3
Total	110	36.7	90	30.0	100	33.3	300	100.0

This table shows that the highest percentage is 22.0% were married having high level of self-concept, and the lowest percentage is 0.3% were divorced having low level self-concept.

Table (4) Distribution of Self-concept levels regarding to Rank.

Military Rank	Self-concept Levels							
	High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Officer	6	2.0	4	1.3	13	4.3	23	7.7
Sub-officer	21	7.0	21	7.0	22	7.3	61	21.3
Reserved	21	7.0	29	9.7	15	5.0	65	21.7
Recruit	46	15.3	27	9.0	35	11.7	108	36.0
Public army	16	5.3	9	3.0	15	5.0	40	13.3
Total	110	36.7	90	30.0	100	33.3	300	100.0

This table shows that the highest percentage is 15.3% were recruit having high level of self-concept, and the lowest percentage is 1.3% were officer having moderate level of self-concept.

Table (5) Distribution of Self-concept levels regarding to Level of Education.

Level of Education	Self-concept Levels							
	High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Illiterate	16	5.3	9	3.0	8	2.7	33	11.0
Read and write	15	5.0	9	3.0	7	2.3	31	10.3
Primary	36	12.0	28	9.3	23	7.7	87	29.0
Secondary	35	11.7	32	10.7	31	10.3	98	32.7
Diploma	1	0.3	5	1.7	8	2.0	14	4.7
Bachelor and postgraduate	7	2.3	7	2.3	23	7.7	37	12.3
Total	110	36.7	90	30.0	100	33.3	300	100.0

This table shows that the highest percentage is 12.0% in primary having high level of self-concept, and the lowest percentage is 0.3% of diploma group having high level of self-concept.

Table (6) Distribution of Self-concept levels regarding to Duration of Captivity.

Duration of captivity Years	Self-concept Levels							
	High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	f	0/	f	0/	f	0/	f	0/
2-5	13	4.3	10	3.3	3	1.0	26	8.7
6-9	35	11.7	24	8.0	28	9.3	87	29.0
10-13	13	4.3	13	4.3	15	5.0	41	13.7
14-17	24	8.0	16	5.3	22	7.3	62	20.7
18-21	24	8.0	21	7.0	28	9.3	73	24.3
22	1	0.3	6	2.0	4	1.3	11	3.7
Total	110	36.7	90	30.0	100	33.3	300	100.0

This table shows that the highest percentage is 11.7% of duration group 6-9 years having high level of self-concept, and the lowest percentage is 0.3% of duration group 22 years also of high level of self-concept.

Table (7) Distribution of Self-concept levels regarding to Date of Repatriation.

Date of repatriation	Self-concept Levels							
	High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	f	0/	f	%	f	0/	f	0/
1990-1992	44	14.7	34	11.3	26	8.7	104	34.7
1993-1995	10	3.4	4	1.3	5	1.7	19	6.3
1996-1998	5	1.7	3	1.0	6	2.0	14	4.7
1999-2001	13	4.3	14	4.7	22	7.3	49	16.3
2002	38	12.7	35	11.7	41	13.7	114	38.0
Total	110	36.7	90	30.0	100	33.3	300	100.0

This table shows that the highest percentage is 14.7% of repatriation group 1990-1992 having high level of self-concept, and the lowest percentage is 1.0% of group 1996-1998 having moderate level of self-concept.

Table 8: Relationship between Variables and Levels of Self-concept.

Variables	Levels of Self-concept											
	High				Moderate				Low			
Age at Capture	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig.	P value	C.s
14-21	0.432	0.258	0.05	NS	0.574	0.155	0.05	NS	0.823	0.000	0.01	HS
22-29	0.723	0.054	0.05	S	0.793	0.039	0.05	S	0.321	0.335	0.05	NS
30-37	0.804	0.013	0.05	S	0.625	0.121	0.05	NS	0.418	0.301	0.05	NS
38-45	0.837	0.000	0.01	HS	0.648	0.103	0.05	NS	0.639	0.124	0.05	NS
46-53	0.691	0.182	0.05	S	0.494	0.304	0.05	NS	0.721	0.058	0.05	NS
54	0.62	0.123	0.05	NS	0.532	0.196	0.05	NS	0.832	0.000	0.01	HS
r: 0.121 sig. 0.037 p< 0.05 C.s S												
Marital Status	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig.	P value	C.s
Married	0.745	0.039	0.05	S	0.511	0.182	0.05	NS	0.427	0.353	0.05	NS
Single	0.615	0.114	0.05	NS	0.381	0.233	0.05	NS	0.383	0.232	0.05	NS
Divorcee	0.142	0.426	0.05	NS	0.564	0.162	0.05	NS	0.251	0.054	0.05	NS
r: 0.098 sig. 0.038 p< 0.05 C.S NS												
Military Rank	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig.	P value	C.s
Officer	0.682	0.091	0.05	NS	0.849	0.000	0.01	HS	0.553	0.191	0.05	NS
Sub-officer	0.635	0.110	0.05	NS	0.765	0.024	0.05	S	0.438	0.215	0.05	NS
Reserved	0.744	0.059	0.05	S	0.811	0.018	0.05	S	0.504	0.198	0.05	NS
Recruit	0.588	0.181	0.05	NS	0.594	0.178	0.05	NS	0.791	0.04	0.05	S
Public Army	0.517	0.198	0.05	NS	0.623	0.108	0.05	NS	0.447	0.311	0.05	NS
r: 0.131 sig. 0.074 p<0.05 C.s S												
Level of Education	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig.	P value	C.s
Illiterate	0.264	0.408	0.05	NS	0.419	0.301	0.05	NS	0.795	0.024	0.05	S
Read and write	0.312	0.335	0.05	NS	0.565	0.187	0.05	S	0.683	0.101	0.05	NS
Primary	0.669	0.101	0.05	NS	0.734	0.035	0.05	S	0.751	0.026	0.05	S
Secondary	0.591	0.112	0.05	NS	0.710	0.039	0.05	S	0.7586	0.021	0.05	S
Diploma	0.684	0.105	0.05	NS	0.771	0.028	0.05	S	0.512	0.165	0.05	NS
Bachelor and postgraduate	0.842	0.000	0.01	HS	0.791	0.024	0.05	S	0.484	0.305	0.05	NS
r: 0.263 sig. 0.024 P<0.01 C.S HS												
Duration of Captivity	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig	P value	C.S	r	Sig.	P value	C.s
2-5	0.328	0.328	0.05	NS	0.421	0.278	0.05	NS	0.724	0.036	0.05	S
6-9	0.411	0.298	0.05	NS	0.361	0.308	0.05	NS	0.681	0.106	0.05	NS
10-13	0.391	0.223	0.05	NS	0.521	0.155	0.05	NS	0.571	0.188	0.05	NS
14-17	0.714	0.039	0.05	S	0.701	0.040	0.05	S	0.421	0.287	0.05	NS
18-21	0.841	0.000	0.01	HS	0.721	0.037	0.05	S	0.346	0.356	0.05	NS
271	0.87	0.000	0.01	HS	0.781	0.026	0.05	S	0.281	0.399	0.05	NS
r: 0.120 sig. 0.038 p<0.05 C.s S												
Date of Repatriation	r	Sig	P value	C.s	r	Sig	P value	C.S	r	Sig.	P value	C.s
1990-1992	0.291	0.396	0.05	NS	0.496	0.168	0.05	NS	0.835	0.000	0.01	HS
1993-1995	0.311	0.331	0.05	NS	0.469	0.178	0.05	NS	0.798	0.019	0.05	S
1996-1998	0.723	0.035	0.05	S	0.741	0.031	0.05	S	0.645	0.109	0.05	NS
1999-2001	0.852	0.000	0.01	HS	0.811	0.000	0.01	HS	0.423	0.296	0.05	NS
2002	0.893	0.000	0.01	HS	0.801	0.000	0.01	HS	0.365	0.324	0.05	NS
r: 0.122 sig. 0.035 p< 0.05 C.S S												

This table revealed that there is a significant relationship between Self-concept and; age at capture, marital status, rank, duration of captivity, and date of repatriation and high significant relationship with level of education.

Discussion:

1- Discussion of demographic characteristics

According to the results of study, the age of the majority of repatriates at capture ranged from 14 to 37 (89.9%) (Table 2) these findings were supported by Hassan and Hassan (1995) when they said that the ages of the repatriates ranged from 20 to 50(5).

The author thinks that these ages for the draft of the armies range within 20 and 45 and are physically ready to endure the burdens of difficulties in army.

Regarding to the marital status (Table 3), the study indicated that (57.3%) from the sample obtained were married, and (42.7%) were singles, this results were supported by Al-Samarai who indicated that (60%) were married and (40%) were singles. From the author's point of view, this high percentage of married is due to the customs and tradition in Iraq, especially in the villages(6).

Regarding to the military rank, more than half of the sample was from the soldiers (57.7%), which consists of; the recruit and the reserved (Table 4), this results was supported by Ammash and Sarmack who said that (67%) of the sample were from soldiers and sub-officers. This is for most armies, includes Iraqi's, and depends upon the compulsory service in the army and among the young ages(7).

The study revealed also most of repatriates were from primary and secondary school graduates (61.7%) (Table 5), this result was confirmed by Hamzah (1994) who revealed that

(68%) of the repatriates were from primary and secondary school graduates. The researcher thinks that a large percentage of Iraqi families have low and moderate level of economical status so they intend to make their sons learn free jobs to live from(s).

According to the "duration of captivity", this study indicated that (45%) of the repatriates had spent 14 to 21 years and (42.7%) had spent 6 to 13 years (Table 6). this is for the half of the Iraqi captives had been captured during 1982, and also half of the Iraqi prisoners of war were released in 1990, it means that approximately half of Iraqi prisoners of war had spent 6 to 13 years in captivity and the rest spent 14 to 21 years for Iran had begun to release them again in a large numbers after year 1998.

Lastly, the study revealed that (34.7%) of the repatriates were released between 1990 and 1992 and (38%) were released after 2002 (Table 7), this is because Iran had released about 41 thousand Iraqi prisoners of war as the International Committee of Red Cross declared in 1992. And other real exchange for those captives happened again after 1998 and 2002(9).

2- Discussion of self-concept consideration

The study revealed that the majority of the former Iraqi prisoners of war (61.7%) (Table 2), who were 14 to 37 years old, had high and moderate level of how they evaluate the experience of captivity and how they see themselves now. These ages are the ages of the youth which relate with the physical and psychological energies, so they could endure most of the captor's bad treatments and physical torture during the captivity and also their psychological and spiritual commitments made them feel optimistic that one day they would go back home again in spite of all the bad treatments they were treated by their captor. Seldge, 1980 said that (61.1%) of 50 prisoners of war in Vietnam had positive changes in self-concept and feel more optimistic(10). Those ages had had the ability to challenge all the methods of "brainwashing" which were achieved to change their beliefs and even the religious and patriotic commitments, Kolb, 1997 said that the intensive pressure under special

circumstances creates situations lead to grow the personality and increase controlling emotions(").

For the period they had spent in captivity, the study indicated that there are two groups which are of 'high and moderate' levels; the prisoners who spent 6 to 9 years (19.7%) and the other group who spent 14 to 21 years (28.3%) (table 3)..In general, both of these

periods consider too long in spite of the wide difference between them for most of former prisoners of war who spent 6 to 9 years were released during earlier years of exchange operation which happened in 1990, so the period of 15 years, between this date and the time of achieving this research, made them approximately semi-rehabilitate psychologically and socially even there were no any programs for that. In the other hand, the high level of self-concept for those who spent 14 to 21 years is due to many factors; the 'age at capture' of most of them is considered high (significant relationship with 'age at capture'); the educational level of the majority is high (high significant relationship with the educational level); most of them were married (high significant relationship with the marital status); and also the majority of them were repatriated in the later year high significant relationship with the 'date of repatriation) (Table 8). So the researcher found; the elder age; the educated; the married; and who repatriated later on. For these qualifications and in spite of this long period, those prisoners still feel that they had done their utmost to keep their principles and morals and not to betray their country and had the responsibility to help others, who were somehow to be considered weak in the same camp they lived together in. They were self-confident and had the strength to resist the burdens of those long heavy years.

Regarding to the the study revealed that; (41%) of the sample who were from 'reserved and recruit' had high and moderate level of self-concept, this is because has; high significant relationship with the; age at capture, marital status, and education level (Table 8). So the researcher found; elder ages, married, and high level of education, so this result gives strong points to the levels of their self-concept.

According to the level of education' the study revealed that the more the level of education is, the more the duration of captivity, the rank, and date of repatriation are, so those repatriates have high level of self-concept for they could distinguish more than other how to adjust to the difficulties and bad circumstances and what to do when they face the plans of their captor, they were aware of about what was going around them.

The study indicates that; (71%) from them said that they believe that it is the will of God, Hamzah said that (17.1%) their beliefs in God exaggerated(8); (67.7%) feel in a good health, still attractive and funny, interested in sport and physical activities, forgive others, try to understand others' points of view, have the satisfaction in their fate, help people, and can easily talk with other. Seldge, 1980 said that (61.1%) of US prisoners of war in Vietnam have good relationship with others, feel profoundly within themselves, feel having the ability to distinguish between the important and the silly matter, have more patience, can understand others, and have good contact with Others(i°; (69.4%) said that they had had the beliefs in the war and its causes, Hamzah, , said that most of Iraqi prisoners of war did not feel guilty and they had done their patriotic commitments and duties for their country(8); (88%) of them said that in spite of the worst treatments and circumstances but they feel that they had got different kinds of profiles from captivity experiences in their life later on.

Anderson, said that US prisoners of war in Vietnam see that their experience was of great benefit^(^); Ronsen, said that the individuals who live severe unordinary experiences or who present sacrifices believe that they got use of the experience such as prisoners of war (13): Shein, said that (21%) from US prisoners of war in Korea said that they had profile from the captivity experience^(^).

Recommendations:

1. Establish special centers for psychosocial rehabilitation for those repatriates according to the results of researches and programs constructed for this purpose.
2. Follow-up programs for the repatriates to know the development of their status.
3. Help the repatriates to live in a good level of life or good pension, and make the facilities to help them continue their education in different levels.

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