Is religiosity a protective factor against attempted suicide: a cross-cultural case-control study.


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Abstract

This cross-cultural study investigates whether religiosity assessed in three dimensions has a protective effect against attempted suicide. Community controls (n = 5484) were more likely than suicide attempters (n = 2819) to report religious denomination in Estonia (OR = 0.5) and subjective religiosity in four countries: Brazil (OR = 0.2), Estonia (OR = 0.5), Islamic Republic of Iran (OR = 0.6), and Sri Lanka (OR = 0.4). In South Africa, the effect was exceptional both for religious denomination (OR = 5.9) and subjective religiosity (OR = 2.7). No effects were found in India and Vietnam. Organizational religiosity gave controversial results. In particular, subjective religiosity (considering him/herself as religious person) may serve as a protective factor against non-fatal suicidal behavior in some cultures.

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