

Socioeconomic stressors in adults and adolescents - deliberate self-poisoning

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Objective: The percentage of deliberate self-poisoning (DSP) continues to be high in the medical practice worldwide. It is the first method of self harm in Iran and most countries (1-2). To evaluate the socioeconomic causes of DSP the present study was done. **Methods:** A prospective cross sectional study of 1417 hospitalized acute deliberate self-poisoning cases over 12 years old, treated in the Loghman-Hakim Poison Hospital between April and August 2006 was carried out. The following factors were studied: gender, age, marital and employment status, history of self harm repetition, literacy level, psychiatric diagnosis and socioeconomic stressors. **Results:** We identified a first attempt of deliberate self-poisoning in 934 patients (65.9%) with a Female/Male ratio of 1.93/1 and a second or more consecutive attempt in 483 patients (34.1%) with Female/Male ratio of 2.14/1. The percentage of women was statistically significantly higher. Mean age was 24±8 years while mode was 22 (Min 13, Max 79). Regarding marital status, 776 patients (54.8%) never married, 445(32.5%) were married, 129(9.1%) were engaged, 56(3.9%) were divorced and 11 (0.8%) were widowed. Literacy level was 5.9 %, 21.5%, 59.5% and 23.1% for elementary, middle, high school and more respectively. The problems with family groups were consisted of parents in 418 (29.5%) individual, spouse in 320(22.6%), children in 14(1%) and the other relatives including siblings in 150(10.6%). Boy/girl friends and engaged relationship problems in 117(8.3%), hopelessness in 112 (7.9%), emotional stresses in 100(7.1%), economical problems in 55(3.9%), unemployment and job difficulties in 23(1.7%), educational difficulties in 22 (1.5%), bereavement in 17(1.2%) were the most common psychosocial factors for DSP. Of 1259 (88.9%) psychiatric assessment, adjustment disorder (59.8%) and depression (33.5%) were the main diagnosis. Housewives were the most common vulnerable patients in this study (36.6%) while 259 students (18.3%) and 102 matriculated and college students (7.2%) were attempting to DSP. Unemployed and black marketers consisted 232(16.4%) of the patients. **Conclusions:** To reduce the number of adult and adolescent deliberate self-poisonings, measures particularly harmonization of the relationships in the family, supplying new employment policies, and teaching life skills are recommended. **References:** (1)Moradi S, Khademi A. Evaluation of suicides resulting in death in Iran, comparing with the world rates. *Journal of Legal Medicine (Islamic republic of Iran)* 2002; 27:16-21. (2)[Doshi A](#), [Boudreaux ED](#), [Wang N](#), et al. National study of US emergency department visits for attempted suicide and self-inflicted injury, 1997-2001. [Ann Emerg Med.](#) 2005; 46(4):369-75.