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The role of social support and spiritual wellbeing in predicting suicidal ideation among marginalized adolescents in Malaysia

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Abstract

Background: The high number of adolescents and young adults harbouring suicidal ideation, as reported by the Ministry of Health Malaysia, is alarming. This cross-sectional study aims to examine the association between social support and spiritual wellbeing in predicting suicidal ideation among Malaysian adolescents.

Methods: A total of 176 adolescents in selected urban areas in the states of Wilayah Persekutuan and Selangor were selected. The Suicide Ideation Scale (SIS) was used to measure the level of severity or tendency of suicidal ideation. The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) was used to measure the perceived social support received by the respondent while the Spiritual Wellbeing Scale (SWBS) was used to measure the religious wellbeing (RWB), the existential wellbeing (EWB) and the overall score of spiritual wellbeing (SWB).

Results: The study found that both RWB and EWB showed significant negative correlation with suicidal ideation. Similarly, support from family and friends also showed a negative correlation with suicidal ideation. Further analysis using multiple regressions showed that RWB and SWB, and family support predict suicidal ideation in adolescents.

Conclusion: Spiritual wellbeing in combination with family support plays a major role in predicting suicidal ideation. Therefore, intervention for encompassing spirituality and family support may contribute to a more positive outcome in suicidal adolescents.

Keywords: Suicidal ideation, Adolescents, Spiritual wellbeing, Social support, Family support

Background

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Measurement instruments

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Ethics approval and consent to participate

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of Research Ethics Committee, National University of Malaysia (UKM) and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards, and was approved by the committee with approval number NN-2018-060. Informed verbal consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. We did not obtain parental/legal guardian/s consent as the participants were all above 18 years old.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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