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Risk factors associated with suicidal thoughts among university students, Baghdad Iraq 2020

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Background: Suicide is the act of deliberately killing oneself. Every year, almost one million people die from suicide, 86% of whom are in low/ middle-income countries. Suicide is among the three leading causes of death for young people under 25 years old according to World Health Organization, as the numbers globally reached 800,000 during 2019 for all ages and both sexes in Iraq total number 1418 suicide case, age-standardized suicide rates all ages 4.7 per 100 000 of total Pop. Suicide cases were increased in recent years due to the difficult political, economic and social conditions the country is going through after the events of ISIS. The study aims to determine the prevalence of suicidal thoughts (S.T) and to determining a risk factors for Suicidal thoughts among selected sample of university students in Baghdad, Iraq 2020.

Methodology: cross sectional descriptive study with an analytic part conducted in 9 (out of 45) universities in Baghdad Capital of Iraq, and randomized lottery sampling for participants from 1/2/2020 to 1/3/2020. Questionnaire administration method was by Self-administered Paper-Based, research questionnaire contained several variables: demographics, monthly income, health habits, as well as the measurement tools applied were Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation (BSSI) the Scores have been calculated from questions. Data analysis was done by SPSS, tests included univariant regression, P-value, and Binary logistic regression to eliminate confounders and determine the strength of association by calculating log odds.

Results: Prevalence of suicide thoughts among total studied sample was 20.7%, and among female only was 25.9%. Only 8 risk factors shown statistically significant association with suicidal thoughts outcome, and these factors (Female gender, Below 25 y age group, Psychological problems history, Emotional distress history, Blockage of the horizon and a loss of hope history, violence exposure (physical-psychological-verbal-sexual) history, Family history of suicide attempts and non-Muslim students)

Conclusions and recommendations: Suicidal thoughts it is considered a serious challenge that exists among college students, and that points to the need to develop national strategy to reduce suicidal through different procedures include (Suicide prevention initiatives on campus, increasing parents' awareness of effective methods of effective communication between parents and adolescents or young, finding jobs and entertainment places for young people, improving the living and economic standard of society, strategies to reduce violence in the society, establishing centers that provide psychological counseling for people who suffer negative feelings due

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to emotional problems or domestic violence and report any suicide thoughts and providing specialized health care to people with mental health illness.

Key words: Suicidal thoughts, Iraq, University students, 2020.

Biography

Marha L. Kamoona is an epidemiologist and manager of surveillance and risk reporting at the IHR Department of the Public Health Directorate at the Iraqi MOH. She graduated from Baghdad University with a Bachelor of Oral and Dental Medicine and Surgery and has a Professional Diploma in Dental Implant from the British Academy of Implant & Restorative Dentistry (BAIRD). Dr. Kamoona is also an IFETP graduate.

Dr. Kamoona has held various positions throughout her career, including employer at FETP Department in 2020, Manager of Health Information System Section from 2018 to 2020, Manager of Administration of Total Quality and Institutional Development in 2017, Manager of Research Unit/ Training & Research Division from 2015 to 2017, and Manager of Dental Unit at MWR/Health Department from 2009 to 2015.

Dr. Kamoona has several credentials and licenses, including Internal Audit (Ministry of Planning 2019), Certified Tot Trainer (Moh 2018), Leadership & Management (CDC Atlanta 2021) and Budget & Finance Operational Planning for Health Program (UNICEF 2022).