Risk of suicidal mortality among multiple attempters

To the Editor,

I read the study by Chen et al1 with great interest. The authors evaluated the risk factors of suicide mortality among multiple attempters in a prospective cohort in Taiwan. Cox proportional hazard models were mainly applied to calculate the hazard ratios for the predictors of suicide, and the authors confirmed that being male, older age (≥ 45 years), shorter interval, and not maintaining methods of low lethality in the last two nonfatal attempts were significant factors for completed suicide. I have some queries on their study.

First, the authors also presented risk factors for multiple attempters of suicide by logistic regression analysis. They cited a recent paper on the effectiveness of aftercare programs for suicide attempters,2 and clarified the importance of aftercare service, although multiple attempters had a higher prevalence of current contact with mental health services. In addition, there are different trends in sex and age on the risk factors between multiple attempters of suicide and completed suicide, and the information should be used for suicide prevention programs in the future.

Second, suicide risk is supposed to be related to mental disorders.3 On this point, Baumert et al4 used Cox regression analysis for predicting suicide mortality with follow up of 6817 workers for an average of 12.6 years. The adjusted hazard ratio (95% confidence interval) of adversity in chronobiological/physical working conditions for suicide mortality was 3.28 (1.43–7.54). By contrast, adverse psychosocial working conditions and job strain had no significance on subsequent suicide mortality. Although there is a difference in selecting individuals between the two studies, job-related information in multiple attempters should also be considered for the analysis.

Finally, the authors observed 861 decedents who repeated suicide attempts. As the number of events was enough for Cox regression analysis, I recommend conducting stratified analysis by sex and age class. I understand that sex and age class are used as adjusting variables in the analysis, however, cause of suicide attempts is affected by these factors. Furthermore, predictors of suicidal death in multiple attempters should be verified in other ethnicities.

References


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