

Study on suicides in Sri Lanka

The primary objective of this study was to identify factors affecting attempted suicide, and quantify the importance of these selected factors. The cases consist of all persons attempting suicide in the year 1997 and brought to any government hospitals in Matale district. The controls were selected from patients in the same ward and hospital and matched according to gender. This was done by conducting a 1:2 matched case control study.

After fitting a conditional logistic regression model it was found that among the many factors tested the factors depression, Age, years lived with spouse, smoking, past alcohol practices and pre-marital affects attempted suicide. A Log-linear model was fitted to identify the characteristics of those who attempt suicide.

Main findings based on this model are, most cases are from the ages between 10 to 30 years, most cases not have long term plans to attempt suicide, most of the cases have been first seen and brought to hospital by family members, males are more prone to attempt suicide. Most of the cases in the 10 to 20 age group are females while in the older age groups (>20) they are males.

Another objective of this study was to determine a suitable model with which to predict future suicide rates in Sri Lanka. The data for this purpose was obtained from police records for a period of 20 years. A multiple regression model was used to achieve this objective. Using this model suicide rates were predicted separately for males and females.