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SUICIDAL ATTEMPTS IN PRIMARY CARE: PREVALENCE AND CORRELATES IN A TUNISIAN AREA

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Aims: This study aimed to determine prevalence and correlates of suicidal attempts in an adult primary care population in Sousse (Tunisia).

Method: Sampling followed a stratified multistage probability cluster design from which a representative sample of adult primary care population of Sousse was obtained. The sample was composed of 1249 subjects aged 18 years or more. Subjects were interviewed by trained clinicians using the Tunisian version of Composite International Diagnostic Interview 2.1.

General and clinical characteristics of subjects who had reported previous suicidal attempts were compared with those of the remainder using *t* test and Chi-2 test.

Results: Mean age in our sample was 43.4 ± 17.62 years, with female gender (70.9%) and urban residency (67.8%) predominance. 62.3% of participants were married, 27.3% celibates and 10.4% divorced or widowed. 68.4% of them had low educational level and 70% were out of work during the last 12 months. Suicidal attempts were found in 2.9% of participants. They were correlated to less than 40 years age ($p=0.036$) and to the diagnosis of major depressive episodes ($p < 10^{-3}$), recurrent major depressive disorder ($p=0.005$) and dysthymic disorder ($p < 10^{-3}$). Among major depressive episodes, only severe ones were associated to higher prevalence of suicidal attempts ($p < 10^{-3}$).

Conclusion: Prevalence of suicidal attempts in Sousse primary care population was 2.9%. It was correlated to low age and to depressive disorders.