



Social-Environmental Factors and Suicide Mortality: A Narrative Review of over 200 Articles

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ABSTRACT

Suicide mortality in a population has long been thought to be sensitive to social, economic and cultural contexts. This review examined research on the relationship between social-environmental variables and suicide mortality published over a ten-year period. The main areas covered in the review included: the economy and income, unemployment, relationship status, fertility and birth rates, female participation in the workforce, religion, migration, location of residence, modernisation, media reporting, alcohol, and access to suicide methods. Results of the review indicated that rates of suicide mortality (deaths per 100,000 in a population) were sensitive to a wide range of social factors. There were relatively stable associations noted between divorce and unemployment with suicide mortality, while many of the reported associations between suicide mortality and other social variables (such as religion, fertility and female participation in the workforce) were influenced by contextual factors and time. These findings indicate the importance of considering the relationship between social factors and suicide as dynamic phenomena.

KEYWORDS

Suicide; Social Factors; Economic Factors; Review; Durkheim; Suicide Prevention

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