

Validation of the Arabic Version of the InterSePT Scale for Suicidal Thinking (ISST) among the Arab Population in Qatar

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Abstract : Introduction: Suicidal ideation and attempts are very common in patients with schizophrenia and still contributes to the high mortality in this population. The InterSePT Scale for Suicidal Thinking (ISST) is a validated tool used to assess suicidal ideation in patients with schizophrenia. This research aims to validate the Arabic version of the ISST among the Arabs residing in Qatar. Methods: Patients diagnosed with schizophrenia were recruited from the department of Psychiatry, Rumailah Hospital, Doha, Qatar. Healthy controls were recruited from the primary health care centers in Doha, Qatar. The validation procedures including professional and expert translation, pilot survey and back translation of the ISST were implemented. Diagnosis of schizophrenia was confirmed using the validated Arabic version of Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (MINI 6, module K) for schizophrenia. The gold standard was the module B on suicidality from MINI 6 also. This module was administered by a rater who was blinded to the results of ISST. Results: Our sample (n=199) was composed of 98 patients diagnosed with schizophrenia (age 36.03 ± 9.88 years; M/F is 2/1) and 101 healthy participants (age 35.01 ± 8.23 years; M/F is 1/2). Among patients with schizophrenia: 26.5% were married, 17.3% had a college degree, 28.6% were employed, 9% had committed suicide once, and 4.4% had more than 4 suicide attempts. Among the control group: 77.2% were married, 57.4% had a college degree, and 99% were employed. The mean score on the ISST was 2.36 ± 3.97 vs. 0.47 ± 1.44 for the schizophrenia and control groups, respectively. The overall Cronbach's alpha was 0.91. Conclusions: This is the first study in the Arab world to validate the ISST in an Arabic-based population. The psychometric properties indicate that the Arabic version of the ISST is a valid tool to assess the severity of suicidal ideation in Arabic speaking patients diagnosed with schizophrenia.

Keywords : mental health, Qatar, schizophrenia, suicide

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