
SUICIDE ATTEMPTS AND "BODY-ART": IS THERE ANY CORRELATION? A PRELIMINARY STUDY

P. Solano¹, M. Magagnoli¹, E. Pizzorno², M. Innamorati¹, L. Bruzzone³, M. Amore¹

¹Neurosciences Ophthalmology and Genetics, Clinica Psichiatrica, Genoa, Italy ; ²Health Sciences, Istituto di Medicina Legale, Genoa, Italy ;

³Univeristà degli Studi di Genova, Facoltà di Medicina e Chirurgia, Genoa, Italy

Introduction

Body- art is associated with an increased risk of self- harming behaviours and suicide attempts (SA) in adolescents, but there is no concluding evidence for adults yet.

Objectives

We investigate the relationship between 'body art' (i.e. tattoos, piercings) and SA in adult patients.

Methods

All patients admitted to the Psychiatric Clinic of Genoa for a SA between October 2012 - January 2013 were enrolled. Age, gender, education, previous SA, psychiatric diagnosis were analyzed. The patients underwent first a clinical interview where the presence of body-art, type, number, location, time between its performance and previous or present SA were assessed along with its meaning for the patient, then SCID I & II.

Results

44 patients were enrolled (24 females). Mean age 47 years. 26 had at least a tattoo, among them six females. Eight had at least one piercing, of whom six were females. 58,3% had a diagnosis of MDD, 41.6% of PD (BPD 72%;NPD 34%; OCPD 42%; PPD 23%). 75% of patients with more than one tattoo had a diagnosis in both axes and attempted suicide more than once. These results show that 40% of our sample has a tattoo and one third a piercing, which presence in the same-age American population is estimated to be 26%. However, these results have a limited statistical significance because of the small sample size.

Conclusion

These results suggest a particular mind-body bond which would correlate SA and body art in adult patients, while previous studies found such evidences only in the adolescent population.