Identification of research priorities for suicide prevention in Nepal: a Delphi study

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Publication

Abstract

Background

Suicide is a significant public health concern in Nepal and there is a need for an evidence-based suicide prevention programme to facilitate stakeholders working towards suicide prevention in Nepal. Collaborative research between stakeholders focussing on shared priorities can help to prevent and control suicide. Hence, we aimed to develop a consensus list of research priorities for suicide prevention in Nepal.

Methods

The Delphi expert consensus method was used to elicit the prioritized research questions for suicide prevention in Nepal. Participants comprised suicide prevention experts (psychologists, psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, researchers and advocates) and people with lived experience. Three rounds of Delphi were conducted; round 1: one to one interviews involving open ended questions used to generate research questions; round 2: ranking of the research questions using a 5-point Likert scale, and round 3: re-ranking of research questions in light of individual and group responses.

Results

Forty-two participants participated in round 1 followed by 38 in round 2 and 39 in round 3. 522 research questions were generated through round 1 which were grouped together and reduced to 33 research questions sent for ranking in round 2. Using a cut off of at least 70% of the panel ranking questions as 'very important' or 'important', 22 questions were retained. These research questions were sent for re-rating in round 3 resulting in a final list of prioritized questions.

Conclusions

This is the first expert consensus study to identify the top research priorities for suicide prevention in Nepal, and used experts in suicide prevention and those with lived experience. A consensus was reached regarding the studies needed to improve suicide data quality, assess the burden and identify factors associated with suicide. A priority driven approach to suicide prevention research may ensure that the research endeavour provides the most useful information for those whose day-to-day work involves trying to prevent suicide.

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