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Factors Affecting Suicidal Ideation in Korean Adolescents

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Objective: The purpose of this study was to evaluate the occurrence of the suicidal ideation and associated factors with self-reported suicidal ideation within the last 12 months among Korean adolescents.

Methods: A total of 1533 adolescents were recruited from middle schools (age range: 13-14 years) in Korea. According to existence of suicidal ideation, they were divided 2 group - suicidal ideation group and non-suicidal ideation group, and the differences between groups in terms of various characteristics, including depression (Kovacs' Children's Depression Inventory), school and family factors, and health related conditions.

Results: A total of 501 (32.7%) middle school students reported suicidal ideation, and the rate of suicidal attempt was 6.9% (n=106). The associated factors of suicidal ideation were female (OR= 2.42, p<0.001), below average academic achievement (OR=1.43, p=0.007), perceived low parental support (OR=2.09, p=0.001), depression (OR=3.25, p<0.001), current alcohol use (OR=2.37, p=0.003), self reported poor health (OR=1.54, p =0.043), and school bullying (OR=1.91, p =0.005).

Conclusions: These results may have important implications for the strategies and specified intervention in preventing suicidal ideation in Korean adolescents.

KEY WORDS: Suicidal ideation, Korean adolescents, Risk factors