

*Dear Editor,*

We have read with great interest the article entitled “ Risk and protective factors for suicide attempt in Iran: A matched case-control study” by Akbari, et al. which was published in the recent issue of AIM. According to authors, recent stressful life events, general health conditions and being problem-focused mentality can increase the risk for suicide attempts. On the other hand, intrinsic religious beliefs and close social networks were considered as preventive factors.<sup>1</sup>

Results indicate the rate of suicide and attempted suicide is elevated during the last decades in Iran.<sup>2</sup> However, there are many factors, such as religion that play a critical role in suicide prevention.<sup>1</sup> Religious affiliation and religious activity appear to protect against suicide.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the moral imperatives of religious beliefs protect against suicidal behavior. Several studies show that the rate of suicide among religious groups is less than non-religious groups. Also, intrinsic religious beliefs and practices can provide potent sources of hope, meaning and comfort for individuals with mental illness.<sup>4,5</sup> Effect of religion on suicide attempts is mediated by social support. In fact, in religious communities, individuals with higher levels of religious beliefs may be supported more by family, friends and social groups.<sup>1,6</sup>

According to the lower suicide rate among religious people and positive efficacy of religion on mental health, it seems that religion and spirituality may play an important role in prevention of suicide attempt, especially in religious countries like Iran. Therefore, it is necessary to control the increasing rate of suicide attempt among Iranian people by religious interventions and social support.

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