



Welcome

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Brain Injury, Faith and Cultural Differences

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Brain Injury, Faith & Cultural Differences



Introduction

Religion, culture, beliefs, and ethnic customs can influence how patients understand health concepts, how they take care of their health, and how they make decisions related to their health

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In 2004 Dr Richard Greenwood and Gavin Yamey published a study entitled - Religious views of the 'medical' rehabilitation model': a pilot qualitative study. Disability and Rehabilitation 26: 455-62.

Purpose:

To study the religious beliefs that patients may bring to the rehabilitation process, and the hypothesis that these beliefs may diverge from the medical model of rehabilitation

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Methods:

Qualitative semi-structured interviews, using clinical vignettes, with representatives of six major religions - Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, and Hinduism.

Representatives were either health care professionals or religious leaders, all with an interest in how their religion approached health issues.

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Results:

There were three recurrent themes in the interviews: religious explanations for injury and illness; beliefs about recovery; religious duties of care by family members toward patients.

The Buddhist, Sikh, and Hindu interviewees described beliefs about karma - unfortunate events happening due to a person's former deeds. Fatalistic ideas, involving God having control over an individual's recovery, were expressed by the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian interviewees.

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Results:

All interviewees expressed the fundamental importance of a family's religious duty of care towards ill or injured relatives, to the extent that in Islam "after service to God, the next level is to parents".

All expressed some views that were compatible with the medical model of rehabilitation, for example prayer and medicine are complementary not conflicting, and each religion sampled could provide models of illness as coping strategies

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Conclusions:

Religious beliefs may both diverge from and resonate with the medical rehabilitation model. Understanding these beliefs may be valuable in facilitating the rehabilitation of diverse religious groups