Frequency and clinical significance of delusions across cultures.

Abstract:
The pattern of delusions in a cross-cultural hospital population was studied. It was found that there were cultural differences in persecutory, grandiose and religious, and sexual and fantastic delusions, accounted for mainly by the relatively higher frequencies in the African and West Indian cultural groups. These phenomena can be understood in terms of the cultural backgrounds of these groups. It is further argued that similarly defined persecutory delusions have a wide clinical significance that goes beyond schizophrenia in some cultural groups.