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Adolescents' thoughts for suicidal ideation

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Abstract

Suicidal Ideation is a significant public health issue among adolescents. Suicidal ideations are often the originator of suicide. The aim of the study was to explore the thoughts related to suicidal ideation among adolescents. Random Sampling technique was used in the study, where samples were drawn from Meerut city. The sample size of the study was 1680 students from class 8th to 12th, divided into two categories (840 Non-Suicidal ideation students and 840 High Suicidal Ideation Students). General Information Blank and Suicidal Ideation Questionnaire (Renolds, 1988) were used to assess the participant. SPSS version 20.0 for windows was used to analyze and interpret the data. The data were analyzed by frequency, percentage and mean. The result demonstrated that adolescents who were reclining in the category of high suicidal ideation are pre-occupied with the high frequency of thoughts related to suicidal ideation rather than non-suicidal ideation.

Keywords: Suicide, Suicidal ideation (suicidal thoughts), Adolescents

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a cumbersome period of life from social and sometime physical point of view. The teen years represent a coming of age in most individual; a time of heightened emotionality. Adolescence can be a stressful time for youngsters. Children are dealing with the challenges of going through puberty, meeting changing expectations and coping with new feelings etc. Most children meet these challenges successfully and grow into healthy adults while others have a harder time coping with their problems. When they are unable to cope with such stressful situations, they may get so frustrated that they may surrender to suicide.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated in 2002 that every year, almost 1 million people die from suicide and the worldwide incidence of suicide is 16 per 100,000 or one death every 40 seconds. However, this figure is up to 20 times more for people attempting suicide. In addition, WHO studies in 2009 show that adolescent people are often at risk, and suicide is the second largest cause of death in this group.

Suicidal Ideation (SI) is the first link or lowest level of suicidal behavior. Suicidal thoughts are also known as suicidal ideation. The occurrence of suicidal thoughts is multidimensional which has different meanings among adolescents in different cultures and places. Many factors affect the thoughts of an individual for example individual personality, family, psychosocial, culture etc. Adolescents face suicidal ideation due to comorbid situations like stress, life stress events, depression and personality, etc., which are precarious for adolescents. Hence, it is necessary to identify or explore the thoughts related to suicide among adolescents.

2. Method and Material

A descriptive research design was used for the study. The study was carried out in schools of Meerut city. Thirty schools of Meerut were randomly selected through the chit fold system for the study. 13 government and 17 private schools were included in the research. Study sample from classes 8th to 12th formed the study sample. The sample size of 1680 students were selected.

Tools

General Information Blank: General Information Blank was constructed by the investigator. This included the basic information about the students like name, sex, age, class, school and family type.

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Suicidal Ideation Questionnaire (SIQ): Measures the frequency and intensity of suicidal thoughts. The SIQ measures one aspect of suicidal behavior- suicidal ideation. The SIQ (senior high school version) consists of 30 items and SIQ-JR (Junior high school version) consists of 15 items. The respondent rates the SIQ items on a 7-point scale. Reliability coefficients are .97 for the SIQ and .93-.94 for the SIQ-JR.

Conduct of the study: The lists of schools were collected from the State Education Board office. Thirty schools were selected for the study through the chit fold system. After taking permission from the principals of the various schools for conducting research, the parents of the students were informed about the study with the help of the class teacher and permission was granted. Thereafter, the students were explained about the study in the presence of school staff. They were provided with basic instruction to make them understand how to perform. Confidentiality of the data was assured so that they could complete the tools without

hesitation. The data was collected through a screening tool – Suicidal Ideation questionnaire.

3. Results and discussion

There are many difficulties associated with the identification of individuals at risk who have the tendency of committing suicide. It can be difficult because individual's choice to suicide for so many different reasons. No matter what the reason, any individual thinking about suicide is considered to be in the at-risk group. There are various thoughts that help in identifying suicidal ideation among adolescents: better if not alive, thought of death, no one cared if alive, if could kill self, if things didn't improve, telling others, writing suicide note, right to kill self, wished were dead, other happier if gone, how other would feel, way people kill themselves, thought of hurting self, thoughts of time, etc. Table 1.1 represents the frequency and percentage of thoughts related to suicidal ideation among adolescents.

Table 1.1: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents related to suicidal thoughts

S. No.	SIQ Items	Frequency (%) N= 1680	Non-SI (%) N=840	High SI (%) N=840
1	I thought it would be better if I was not alive	439(26.13)	27(3.21)	412 (49)
2	I thought about killing myself	347(20.65)	0(0)	347(41.30)
3	I thought about how I would kill myself	334(19.88)	0(0)	334(39.76)
4	I thought about when I would kill myself	278(16.54)	0(0)	278(33.90)
5	I thought about people dying	427(25.41)	178(21.19)	249(29.64)
6	I thought about death	854(51)	375(44.64)	479(57.02)
7	I thought about what to write in a suicide	364(22)	7(0.83)	363(43.21)
8	I thought about writing a will	92(5.4)	19(2.26)	73(8.69)
9	I thought about telling people I plan to kill myself	43(2.55)	0(0)	43(5.11)
10	I thought that people would be happier if I were not around	746(44.40)	247(29.40)	499(59.40)
11	I thought about how people would feel if I killed myself	580(34.52)	126(15)	454(54.04)
12	I wished I were dead	546(32.5)	43(5.11)	503(59.88)
13	I thought about how easy it would be to end it all	67(4)	2(0.23)	65(7.73)
14	I thought that killing myself would solve my problem	754(44.88)	104(23.80)	650(77.38)
15	I thought others would be better off if I was dead	653(38.86)	139(16.54)	514(61.19)
16	I wished I had the nerve to kill myself	486(29)	0(0)	486(57.85)
17	I wished that I had never been born	461(27.44)	4(0.47)	457(54.40)
18	I thought if I had the chance I would kill myself	406(24.16)	5(0.59)	401(47.73)
19	I thought about ways people kill themselves	440(26.1)	196(23.33)	244(29.04)
20	I thought about killing myself, but would not do it	540(32.14)	143(17.02)	397(47.26)
21	I thought about having a bad accident	501(30)	10(1.19)	491(58.45)
22	I thought that life was not worth living	460(27.3)	47(5.59)	413(49.16)
23	I thought that my life was too rotten to continue	598(35.5)	109(12.97)	489(58.21)
24	I thought that the only way to be noticed is to kill myself	489(30)	9(1.07)	480(57.14)
25	I thought that if I killed myself people would realize I was worth caring about	482(29)	89(10.5)	393(46.78)
26	I thought that no one cared if I lived or died	853(51)	382(45.47)	471(56.07)
27	I thought about hurting myself but not really killing myself	689(41)	243(28.92)	446(53.09)
28	I wondered if I had the nerve to kill myself	393(23.39)	0	393(46.78)
29	I thought that if things did not get better, I would kill myself	274(16.30)	3(0.35)	271(32.26)
30	I wished that I had the right to kill myself	247(14.70)	0(0)	247(29.40)

Values in parenthesis denote the percentage

Table 1.1 elucidates the frequency and percentage of thoughts related to suicidal ideation among adolescents. As per the findings, 51 percent of adolescents had thoughts about death. Approximately 45 percent of adolescents thought that killing would solve their problems. They had few (5.4%) thoughts about writing a will and a small number of adolescents (4%) thought about how easy it would be to end it all.

Further, Table 1.1 illustrated that approximately equal percent of respondents (21%) had thoughts of killing themselves, writing suicide note and the method. Very few (2.5%) had thought of telling other about suicide.

Further results revealed that High suicidal ideation respondents

(41.3%) had thoughts of killing themselves, (39.76%) respondents had thought about how they would kill themselves, approximately (77%) high suicidal ideation respondents and (23.80%) Non suicidal ideation respondents had thought that killing themselves solves their problem.

Among these thoughts few of them are considered as critical are like thoughts of killing elf, thoughts of method, writing will, telling others, how easy it would be, would if had chance, Better if not alive, Thought of time, Thought of people dying, thought of death, writing suicide note, Others happier if gone, How others would feel, Wished were dead, Others better off, Wished had never, Wished never been born,

Thought, but would not, Others realize worth, No one cared if alive, Thought of hurting self, If could kill self, If things didn't improve, right to kill self, ways people kill themselves, having a bad accident, life not worth living, life too rotten, only way to be noticed. This would aid in identifying high suicidal risk among adolescents. Therefore, they needed well-developed plans and prevention strategies such as general suicide education programs (General suicide education programs are typically school-based programs that review with students the facts and myths about suicide, alert them to warning signs and provide information about how to seek help for themselves and other), screening program and peer support programs in order to combat the emergence of suicidal thoughts among adolescents. Therapists or counsellor, whose provided development programs and prevention strategies, should be trained and skilled in administrating diagnostic instrument and different diagnostic tool. Therapist should develop a home-school communication system to share information on the student's academic, social and emotional behavior and any development concerning medication or side effects. Therapist should plan effective intervention sessions for the diagnosed group or person. Therapist should frequently monitor whether the student has suicidal thoughts or not.

4. Conclusion

According to the present finding, adolescents who were reclining in the category of high suicidal ideation pre-occupied with the high frequency of thoughts related to suicidal ideation rather than non-suicidal ideation. Respondents who faced high level of risk, they need immediate treatment such as behavior therapy or counseling so that they can control their thoughts, emotions and cope with negative thoughts.

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