

Suicidal Ideation Among Adolescent Students: A Situation of a Serious Concern

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Abstract:- Suicide as a 2nd leading cause of death among adolescents has become a public health urgency worldwide. Suicide is not a sudden act but is a continuum which starts with thoughts of ending one's life (suicidal ideation). The purpose of this study is to find the incidence of high level of suicidal ideation among adolescent students in general and male and female adolescents in particular. 2250 adolescent students studying in different government higher secondary schools of district Anantnag, Srinagar, and Baramulla were taken as the sample for the study using stratified random sampling technique. The tool employed for assessing the incidence of high level of suicidal ideation was The Suicidal Ideation Scale developed by Dr. Devendre Sing Sisoda and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar (2011). For analyzing the data percentage statistics was used. The findings revealed that 6.48% of the respondents were having high suicidal ideation and moreover female adolescent students were found to be more susceptible to high suicidal ideation than males.

Keywords:- Suicide, Suicidal Ideation, Incidence, Gender.

I. INTRODUCTION

Suicide has become a significant concern in Kashmir, where it was formerly rare. NCRB (2010) recorded 248 suicides in Jammu and Kashmir, while over 287 persons committed suicide in 2011. Suicide fatalities increased by 43.3% in J & K in 2012, when 417 people were reported to have ended their life by committing suicide (NCRB, 2012). In 2019, 284 people committed suicide in J & K, accounting for 2.1% of the state's population of one lakh (NCRB, 2019). While the suicide rate in J & K is lower than the national average of 10.8 percent per lakh people, it is a buzzing signal to reflect.

A small number of people consider suicide as a spur of the moment, but for the majority, it is a deliberate act motivated by extended periods of despair or horrible circumstances (Jamison, 1999). It is believed that suicidal ideation is a prelude to suicidal conduct as well as a predictor of future suicide attempts (Brent, 1989; Reynolds, 1988; Smith and Crawford, 1986). Suicidal behaviour may be thought of as a continuum, with the first step being suicidal ideation, followed by planning, an attempt, and eventually committing suicide (Jena and Sidharta, 2004; Moscicki, 1997). Suicidal ideation, in contrast to suicide attempts, is far more prevalent than we realize, affecting 11-14 percent of

people in Western nations and 12-17 percent in Asian countries (Sareen et al., 2005). In Asian cultures, the pooled lifetime prevalence of suicidal ideation varies from 2.3 to 23.6 percent, whereas in Western cultures, the prevalence ranges from 3 to 15 percent. Adolescence is the period of life in which people are mostly likely to experience suicidal ideation, out of all the phases of development (Andrews & Lewinsohn, 1992). According to a study conducted by Reinherz et al (2006), adolescents who experience suicidal thoughts have a 12 times increased likelihood of committing suicide before the age of thirty years. Accordingly, it has become critical to identify students who have high degree of suicidal ideation in order to prevent them from formulating potentially life-threatening plans. The present study is an exertion in this direction.

A. Objective of the study

- To identify adolescent students with high level of suicidal ideation.
- To study prevalence of high suicidal ideation among adolescent students on the basis of gender.

B. Research question

- What is the magnitude of suicidal ideation among adolescent students in Kashmir?
- Is there any difference in prevalence of high suicidal ideation among male and female adolescent students?

C. The sample

As the target population for the current research study was adolescent students of Kashmir. The investigator used a stratified random sampling to select 2250 adolescent students of class 11th (Government HSS only) from three major districts (Anantnag, Srinagar, and Baramulla) of Kashmir to form sample of the present study.

D. Tools used

Suicidal ideation scale by Sisoda and Bhatnagar was used to assess the prevalence of high suicidal ideation among adolescent students. The scale categorizes suicidal ideation into five levels based on the range of scores. The scores between 25-30 shows very low suicidal ideation, 31-45 low suicidal ideation, 46-105 average suicidal ideation, 106-120 high suicidal ideation, and 121-125 shows very high suicidal ideation. The scale has 25 items in which 4 items are negative and remaining 21 are positive.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows elevated suicidal ideation among adolescent students in district Baramulla, Anantnag, and Srinagar. Suicidal ideation is considered higher in adolescents whose score lies between 106-120 on the scale of suicidal ideation. In Anantnag district, 57 out of 753 adolescent students exhibit significant suicidal ideation, which is the highest rate among the three districts examined by the researcher, followed by Baramulla (6.23%), and Srinagar (5.48%). The number of adolescent students with significant thoughts of suicide is modest in Srinagar, yet it is alarming.

Table 2 illustrates the significant incidence of suicidal thoughts among male and female adolescent students in the districts of Baramulla, Anantnag, and Srinagar. District Srinagar had the greatest number of male adolescent students with high degree of suicidal ideation (7.02%), followed by district Anantnag (4.95%) and Baramulla (3.13%). Female adolescent students from Anantnag (9.33%) had the greatest proportion of strong suicidal ideation, followed by Baramulla (8.17%) and Srinagar (4.73%). In district Baramulla and Anantnag female adolescent students have high rate of suicidal ideation, but district Srinagar paints a contrasting

image, with higher number of male adolescent students exhibiting suicidal thoughts than female students. The disparity is due to differing cultural origins, greater concern for females in district Srinagar than in Baramulla and Anantnag. With the majority of parents in district Srinagar being literate, parental engagement is more with female adolescents. Exposure to counselling and difference in socio-economic status of the family also differ. Overall, female adolescent students scored higher (7.58%) on a scale indicating a high degree of suicidal ideation than male adolescents (4.64%).

As per the objectives of this study, it was found that high level of suicidal ideation is prevalent among 6.48% of the total sample participants. The results of the current study are fairly comparable to those of Garrison et al (1991), who found that 5.5 percent of adolescent respondents had high degree of suicidal ideation. Another research study that corroborates the present study's findings was undertaken by Dubow et al (1989), who found a high rate of suicidal ideation in 7.7% of school going adolescents living in a semi-rural community. Joffe, Offord, and Boyle (1988) discovered that suicidal ideation was prevalent in between 5% and 10% of male and 10% to 20% of female students.

Table 1: Representing prevalence of high suicidal ideation among adolescent students

S. No	District	No. of students	No. of students with high level of SI	Percentage
1	Baramulla	914	57	6.23
2	Anantnag	753	57	7.56
3	Srinagar	583	32	5.48
Total		2250	146	6.48

Table 2: Showing prevalence of high suicidal ideation among male and female adolescent students

District	No. of Students	No. of students with high level of SI	Percentage
Baramulla	M 351	11	3.13
	F 563	46	8.17
Anantnag	M 303	15	4.95
	F 450	42	9.33
Srinagar	M 185	13	7.02
	F 398	19	4.73
Total	M 839	39	4.64
	F 1411	107	7.58

III. CONCLUSION

A total of 2250 adolescent students from various government higher secondary schools in the districts of Anantnag, Srinagar, and Baramulla, representing three subdivisions (South, Central and North) of Kashmir participated in the current research study. It was found that 6.48% of the overall sample had high degree of suicidal ideation, which is a significant finding. Furthermore, female adolescent students were shown to be more susceptible to elevated suicidal thoughts (7.58%) than male students (4.64%). The findings of the current research study are alarming, and they need the attention of all those who are involved in developing and implementing policies to curtail the pace of rising suicidal ideation.

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