

Assessment of Suicidal Behaviours and Knowledge on Suicidal Behaviours among Adolescents

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Abstract

Introduction: Adolescence has frequently been called "the tumultuous teens". During the past quarter-century, suicide among the young has emerged as a significant global public health problem. Given the alarming increase in suicide reported behaviours, preventing youth suicide has become an issue of paramount importance in recent years. *Objectives:* The study aimed to assess the suicidal behaviours and knowledge on suicidal behaviours, among adolescents in a selected residential area of Delhi. *Methods:* A descriptive survey was conducted on sixty adolescents, aged 10-19 years, selected through convenient sampling method from residential area of Delhi. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection and the data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. *Results:* 85% of the adolescents were found to have mild suicidal behaviours and 91% of them had inadequate knowledge about suicidal behaviours. Further, no significant relationship was found between suicidal behaviours and selected socio demographic variables such as gender, religion, marital status of parents, monthly income of the family and family history of suicide. *Conclusion:* Results confirmed that adolescents require awareness, prevention and management techniques related to suicidal behaviours as they are at risk for suicidal behaviours. However, in India such studies are limited and need further exploration.

Key words: Adolescents; Suicidal Behaviour.

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Introduction

The world is home to 1.2 billion individuals aged 10-19 years. Adolescents aged between 10-19 years account for more than one-fifth of the world's population [1]. It is necessary to invest in adolescents as the future leaders and guardians of nations development [2].

Adolescents are generally perceived as a healthy age group, and yet 20% of them, in any given period, experience a mental health problem, most commonly depression or anxiety. In many settings, suicide is among the leading cause of death in young people [3]. Mental well-being is fundamental to good quality of life. Happy and confident adolescents are most likely to grow into happy and confident adults, who in turn contribute to the health and well-being of nations [2]. Mental health problems among adolescents carry high social and economic costs, as they often develop into more disabling conditions later in life. Suicide is among the top three causes of death among youth worldwide. According to WHO (World Health Organization), every year, almost one million people die from suicide and 20 times more people attempt suicide; a global mortality rate of 16 per 100,000, or one death every 40 seconds and one attempt every 3 seconds, on an average rate [4]. The numbers of suicides are increasing in India and the increasing rates during recent decades are consistent with the global trend. India accounts for 10% of world's suicides. According to the latest national crime record bureau report, there are over 1.2 lakhs suicides in 2006 and 1.3 lakhs in 2007 [5]. This study aimed to assess the suicidal behaviours and knowledge on suicidal behaviours, among adolescents in a selected residential area of Delhi.

Methodology

Research approach in this study was quantitative with a descriptive survey design to assess the suicidal behaviours and knowledge on suicidal behaviours among adolescents residing in a selected residential area of Delhi. 60 adolescents between 10-19 years of age of Dilshad Colony, Delhi were selected through convenience sampling technique. The tool used for the study was structured questionnaire developed by us. The structured questionnaire was divided into two parts to assess the suicidal behaviours and to assess the knowledge on suicidal behaviours among adolescents. Part1: Section-A consisted of questions related to personal and family details. Section-B consisted of 23 items to assess the suicidal behaviours among adolescents. Part2 consisted of 40 items to assess the knowledge on suicidal behaviours among adolescents. Content validity of the tool was established by seven experts who were from the field of Psychiatry, Nursing and Clinical Psychology. The Reliability of the rating scale to assess suicidal behaviours was calculated using Cronbach’s alpha formula and the reliability (r) was found to be 0.99 and for the knowledge questionnaires KR-20 was used and the reliability (r) was found to be 0.80. Before the collection of data, a formal administrative approval was sought from the concerned authorities, i.e., Residential Welfare Association of the area to conduct the study. Ethical clearance to conduct the study was taken from the Institutional Ethical Committee. The

data was collected from 23rd October to 6th November 2015. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents and their consent for participation in the study was taken. The data taken were subjected to analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results

Findings Related to the Suicidal Behaviours among Adolescents

51(85%) adolescents had mild suicidal behaviours. Moderate suicidal behaviours were seen in 5(8.3%) adolescents. 4(6.7%) of the adolescents had no suicidal behaviours and none were found to have severe suicidal behaviours.

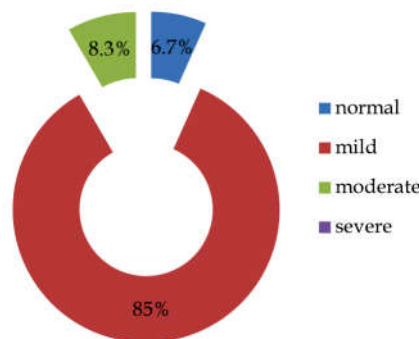


Fig. 1: Doughnut diagram showing frequency percentage distribution of adolescents by the severity of suicidal behaviours

Table 1: Mean, Median, Standard deviation, possible range of scores, range of obtained scores of suicidal behaviour score and obtained by the assessment of knowledge on suicidal behaviours among adolescents n=60

	Possible range of scores	Range of obtained scores	Mean	Median	Standard deviation (SD)
Suicidal behavior	0-46	0-14	3.466	2	3.088
Knowledge scores	0-40	10-26	16.88	17	2.99

Findings Related to the Level of Knowledge on Suicidal Behaviours among Adolescents

55(91.7%) adolescents had inadequate knowledge on suicidal behaviours and only 5(8.3%) had

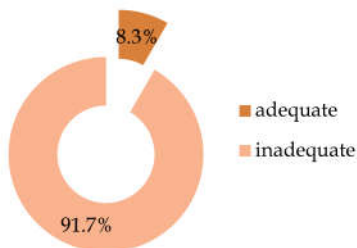


Fig. 2: Doughnut diagram showing frequency percentage distribution of the adolescents according to their level of knowledge on suicidal behaviours among adolescents

adequate knowledge on suicidal behaviours.

Findings Related to Relationship between Suicidal Behaviours and Selected Socio Demographic Variables among Adolescents

The obtained value of Fisher exact test to establish relationship between suicidal behaviours and gender, religion, marital status of parents, monthly income of family and family history of suicide were found to be not significant at 0.05 level of significance. This showed that there was no significant relationship between the suicidal behaviours and gender, religion, marital status of parents, monthly income of family and family history of suicide.

Discussion

The findings of the present study revealed that 85% of adolescents had mild suicidal behaviours. The findings are similar to the findings by Dogra, Olayinka [6] et al. where they reported that adolescents had higher rates of suicidal behaviour. In their study, out of 1429 youth, 20% reported suicidal ideations and 12% reported they had attempted suicide in the last year.

The findings of the present study revealed that 91.7% of adolescents had inadequate knowledge about suicide and there was a need for awareness among them. The finding is similar to the findings by Kalafat and Elias [7], where they had experimental group which gained more knowledge than the control group after attending classes of suicide awareness intervention. The findings of the study is similar to the findings of the study by Arya.S, where 49% adolescents had low, 41% average and 10% had high knowledge towards suicide [8].

The findings of the present study revealed that there was no significant relationship of suicidal behaviours with demographic variables like gender, religion, marital status of parents, monthly income of family and family history of suicide. The findings are in contrast to the findings of the study by Gould MS, Fisher P [9] et al. where there was a significant independent impact of family history of suicidal behaviour. the study findings are also in contrast to the findings of the study by Fergusson DM, Woodward LJ [10], Horwood LJ where they found that the childhood profile of those at greatest risk of suicidal behaviour was that of a young person reared in a family environment characterized by socio-economic adversity, marital disruption etc.

Conclusion

Adolescents require a special focus as they represent an important developmental link between childhood or environmental circumstances and adult outcomes, in which previous adaptation patterns or difficulties may decrease, continue, intensify, or change. They have a range of behavioural problems, as it is described in various Nursing literature.

Unfortunately, some may at one point or another perceive suicide as a permanent answer to problems that are more often than not just temporary. The self doubts, confusion, and pressures to succeed or conform can come at a high price for troubled adolescents.^[1] Keeping this in mind, this researcher prepared an informational booklet based on identified suicidal behaviours among adolescents so as to prevent suicidal behaviours in them and also in others.

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