
**EXPLORING THE CAUSES, OF SUICIDE INCIDENTS
WITH GUNSHOT IN SINDH**

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ABSTRACT

It can be argued that no country is free from the menace of suicide incidents, committed with gunshot. The number of suicide incidents is increasing in day by day in our country. This paper investigates the major causes of such incidents. This paper is specifically focused only on the study of suicide incidents committed with gunshot in Sindh province of Pakistan. In fact the incidents of the suicide are more common among youth. Growing rate of suicide incidents indicate that it has become a serious social problem which is affecting wider communities. The paper also explains the issue of suicide in legal perspective. The Pakistan Penal Code, (1860) does not recognize or defines the term of suicide, as an offense punishable under the law. Thus, this study will also suggest measures to reduce the incidents of suicide. Communities in general and Government in particular will benefit from the ideas generated by this research stud.

Keywords: Suicide, Legal Perspective, Youth, Pakistan Penal Code

INTRODUCTION

The research study is focused on the investigation of the causes of suicide. The growing rate of suicide in society has significantly increased. The cases of suicide and attempt to commit suicide are also reported from all parts of country. However, in Sindh the suicide has become dangerous problem. The causes of the suicide are numerous. However, the culture people share is also linked with the social and psychological causes of suicide. Culture can be source of norms, values and behaviors which are associated with the motivation behind the incidents of suicide. Further the culture is a single form of cognitive and acquired knowledge with its appropriate usage (Hamad, 1999).

One of the main factors for crime is associated with culture. In some cultures suicide is considered best way to end life. For instance,

in Japan suicide is considered respectful way to die. Further cultural conflicts also create conditions for suicide. It was found in study that there were intercultural conflicts between first language speakers of English instructors and students of them, native speakers of Arabic language (Maureen, *et.al.*, 2015).

Nevertheless, there are various social factors which also contribute to growth of suicide cases. Many researchers have attempted to measure the economic causes, in the cases of Homicide and suicide. Statistics are not yet enough to discover any precise relationship between poverty and crime. Further, the role of heredity, environment, family background maladjustment to society have not been studied sufficiently.

In case of Pakistan, poverty is one of the major causes of suicide. Poverty makes life miserable, and creates friction between the parents and their children. As a result, children become intolerable and find difficult to adjust them in society. In Sindh most affected part is Mipurkhas. Most of the parts this division are affected by droughts and famine. Further the lack of employment, educational and health facilities have made situation from bad to worse. This situation breeds the frustration, aggression, and deprivation which cause suicide. Further poor implementation of laws and injustice in society also give birth to suicide.

LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

Black's Law Dictionary defines the term suicide as self-destruction; the deliberate termination of one's existence, while in the possession and enjoyment of his mental faculties (Henry, 1968).

The term suicide is also used to mean death caused by one's own hand, irrespective of mental condition. However, in other cases intent is considered essential. Durkheim's study of suicide provide a variety of explanations for the phenomenon, as the insanity, psychiatric dispositions', as Durkheim phrased it; the geographical, features such as climate, temperature and length of day; and finally, that suicide was the result of the people imitating each other, these explanations are still offered with phrase like 'suicide while balance of mind was upset or from newspapers discussion as copycat suicides.

There are many types of desperate suicide viz. strangulation, poisoning, drowning and suicide with gunshot, as reported in media as

the major types of suicide prevalent in Sindh Province of Pakistan. The study of legal position of the incidents indicates that suicide is not recognized as a crime as per Pakistan Penal Code. However, the attempt to suicide is offence under Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). According to Section 325 attempt to commit suicide is an offence. Whoever attempts to commit suicide and does any act towards the commission of such offence, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both (PPC, 1860).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Investigating the causes of growing incidents of suicide by gunshots
2. Exploring the forms of suicide.
3. Examining the risks associated with suicide.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the socio-cultural causes of suicide by firearm
2. What are different forms of suicide in study area
3. What are risks associated with suicide by firearm.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative in nature. Thus, qualitative methods of data collection and data analysis have been used. The research is limited to the suicide incidents taking place by means of firearm (gunshot) in Sindh Province. This study has used primary and well as secondary sources. The primary data for this research study was collected through a questionnaire. The respondents for this study included Medico-legal officers, lawyers, doctors, and members of civil society. A list of 100 respondents was made out of which sixty respondents were selected by using random sampling technique. Participants were approached at their work places they were informed about the purpose of the study. Consent of all the respondents was ensured before distribution of questionnaires. Sixty questionnaire was designed to examine the relationship between the incident of suicide and social and psychological factors. Questionnaire was also designed in the way to gather information about the various forms of suicide.

In order to supplement the data, researcher has benefited from Government publications, research journals and law journals and

newspapers. On the basis of data analysis, the results have been generated. In the light of these findings, recommendations and suggestions have been included at the end of the paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Moore on (1996), in U.K. (Moore on Investigating *Crime and Deviance* (1996) has highlighted the functional approach to crime, while discussing substantially on the nature and causes of suicide, wherein he has highlighted the causes and reasons strength, and weaknesses of the functional approach and demonstrates how it can be applied to a variety of the social problems, other than the crime.

Ritche Hannah, et.al., (2013) this study has explored the ratio of suicide committed with firearm. Since the 60% of firearm, deaths in the US are from suicides. Firearms are one of the most common suicide methods globally. They are responsible for approximately 8% of global suicide deaths with firearm. But they play a much larger role in some countries. Here we see differences in the suicide rates from firearms across the world; it is expressed as the number of suicide deaths per 100,000 (one lac) individuals in a given population, in the United States which is at over 6 deaths per 100,000 it's more than ten times greater than many countries across Europe. In the UK, for example, this rate is more than 30 times lower.

A.L. Beautrais, et.al., (2006), this study is focused on Firearms Legislation and Reductions in Firearm-related Suicide Deaths in New Zealand. This study by staff of the Canterbury Suicide Project published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry in 2006 analyzed the possible impact of the 1992 amendments to the firearm laws on firearm-related suicide in New Zealand. The study covered an eighteen-year period from 1985 to 2002. The authors stated that the figures “clearly suggest that the introduction of the 1992 firearms legislation led to a detectable reduction in firearm suicides.” The trends were most marked for youth suicide, with the authors calculating that the figures for fifteen to twenty-four years olds implied that, “when compared with the pre-legislation period, rates of firearm suicide were reduced by 39% in the implementation period [1993-1996] and by 66% in the post-implementation period [1997-2002].

Ritche Hannah, et.al., (2013), investigates the role of State intervention in Japan. Study suggests that Government intervenes in

Japan in order to decrease the risk of suicide among vulnerable populations. It is the leading cause of death in men among the ages of 20-44 and for women among the ages of 15 to 34. In Japanese culture, suicide, in some circumstances, has long been viewed as an honorable way to die. Japanese men are twice as likely to commit suicide as their female counterparts, particularly after a divorce. Suicide among men who have recently lost their jobs and are no longer able to maintain their families. They may feel that they have dishonored themselves and their families and that suicide is the honorable way out of the situation. With a high cultural tolerance for suicide, many older adults end their lives after they retire. Aokigahara Forest, at the base of Japan's Mount Fuji, is a hotspot for suicides, as hundreds of people go there each year to end their lives. Police regularly patrol the area for suicide victims and survivors.

The data was analyzed on the basis of study objectives. The demographic details of the participants were also included.

Chlopek (2008) conducted a study in Germany on the importance of intercultural approach. He pointed out that the language used by the English teacher in classroom was tempering with fundamentals of human identity.

(Palmer 2015), argues that the intercultural conflicts and issues also create conditions for suicide. In case of showing no respect for religion, country for person make him or her intolerable for others. It was found in study that there were intercultural conflicts between first language speakers of English instructors and students of them, native speakers of Arabic language.

Keeping in view above themes emerged from literature review, questions were prepared and distributed among respondents.

TABLE SHOWING THE RATIO AND PERCENTAGE OF RESEARCH TITLE RESULTS ON QUESTIONNAIRES AMONG 20 EACH (DOCTORS, ADVOCATES & PROSECUTORS)

Question No.	20 Doctors (33.3 %)					20 Advocates (33.3 %)					20 Prosecutor (33.3 %)					Total Average				
	a/ True	b/ False	C	d	E	a/ True	b/ False	c	D	E	a/ True	b/ False	C	d	E	a/ true	b/ False	c	d	E
	Q.1.	8	2	8	2	0	7	3	8	2	0	8	2	7	3	0	7.66	2.33	7.66	2.33
Q.2.	10	5	4	1	0	9	5	4	2	0	11	4	4	1	0	10	4.66	4	1.33	0
Q.3.	3	12	3	2	0	4	10	3	3	0	2	12	3	3	0	3	11.3	3	2.66	0
Q.4.	4	9	4	3	0	3	10	4	3	0	5	9	3	3	0	4	9.33	3.66	3	0
Q.5.	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20
Q.6.	5	7	5	3	0	5	6	6	3	0	6	8	4	2	0	5.33	7	5	2.66	0
Q.7.	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20
Q.8.	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20
Q.9.	6	7	3	4	0	6	7	3	4	0	5	9	3	3	0	5.66	7.66	3	3.66	0
Q.10.	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20
Q.11.	13	3	2	2	0	11	4	2	3	0	12	3	2	3	0	12	3.33	2	2.66	0
Q.12.	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20
Q.13.	3	11	3	3	0	4	10	3	3	0	4	12	2	2	0	3.66	11	2.66	2.66	0
Q.14.	7	2	2	3	6	6	3	2	3	6	7	2	4	2	5	6.66	2.33	2.66	2.66	5.66
Q.15.	1	5	2	2	10	2	4	2	2	10	1	6	0	2	11	1.33	5	1.33	2	10.3
Q.16.	18	0	1	1	0	17	1	1	1	0	19	0	0	1	0	18	0.33	0.66	1	0
Q.17.	19	0	1	0	0	18	0	1	1	0	19	0	1	0	0	18.6	0	1	0.33	0
Q.18.	9	4	3	4	0	9	3	4	4	0	10	4	3	3	0	9.33	3.66	3.33	3.66	0
Q.19.	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20
Q.20.	100%					100%					100%					100%				
Q.21.	50%	50%				50%	50%				50%	50%				50%	50%			
Q.22.	50%	50%				50%	50%				50%	50%				50%	50%			
Q.23.	50%	50%				50%	50%				50%	50%				50%	50%			
Q.24.	100%					100%					100%					100%				
Q.25.	50%	50%				50%	50%				50%	50%				50%	50%			

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

- The study indicates that suicides are committed by means of strangulation and poisoning more than the other means including committing the same with firearm. The medical and forensic science has also main role to find distance of firearm gunshot in suicide is mostly actuated/realized, respondents posed that 7.66 person as near contact muzzle held at short distance from skin 1 c.m, secondly with Contact Muzzle passed with skin with ratio of 5.66 persons, thirdly distance beyond that which produces stippling with ratio of 3.66 persons and finally Intermediate from few c.m's up to several feet with ratio of 3 persons total out of 20 persons from each group.
- There was highest response rate for the age group of 14-19. The suicide rate was found highest in this group.
- This study also aimed at examining risks associated with suicide. It was found in this study that male teenagers were at risk more than female teenagers.
- Study indicates that major cause of suicide by gunshot was depression. However, poverty, socio-psychological factors also significantly contributed to depression.
- The participants of this study suggested ways and means to reduce the rate of suicide.
- They proposed that first aid centres should be established for rehabilitation of those who survived in their attempts for suicide. These Centre must be established at UC, Taluka and District level.
- It was further observed that depression and isolation was caused by various social and economic factors, which include unemployment and poverty. Majority of respondents were of the view that suicide is more common in rural areas than in urban areas.
- Study shows that attempt to commit suicide is offence under PPC. Most of respondents were unaware about the legal position of suicide cases.
- Study also revealed that for rehabilitation of survivors in suicide attempts need consultation and guidance at initial stage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is found in the study that more deep and intensive study/investigation needs to be conducted on the problem being faced by our society. Following recommendations would help to at least minimize the incidents of suicide committed with gunshot wounds:

- Keeping away weapons by parents can save lives of the innocent children in house.
- Government should establish centers at every Taluka, U.C, District and then Divisional levels for depressed patients.
- The parents' care is also important for the protection of their children.
- Proper guidance and counseling should be provided to the Schools, Colleges and University students.
- The activities of the students residing at hostels must be looked after so that they may be saved at an early stage of depression symptoms.
- Government should put ban on manufacturing and selling of toys in shape of Fire-Arms/gunshot, holding of gunshots (duplicates/not original but toy).
- Females are mostly affected by domestic violence, work place harassment, family disputes between spouse and family members family disputes like male domination, and other disputes over ownership of things and property belonging to women, deprivation of their rights are also main reasons for committing or fabricating designating by planning Homicides as Suicide with a firearm to usurp the women property. Thus, it is recommended that women need to be empowered.
- The treatment through speech therapy in holy mosques and temples and holy prayers places of workshop necessary for eradicating the evil of suicide. People should lead how to warned Almighty Allah for blessings their safe.
- The psychologist and experts suggest for medical assistance for depressed persons due to continuous stress and depression.
- Parents, teachers and specifically government stakeholders is responsible for taking precautionary steps necessary to keep youth engaged in healthy activities.
- Use of drugs/narcotic substances, by the children, men and women leads to commit suicide with a firearm in such drunken condition of narcotic substance, in such scenario/circumstances, the drugs and narcotics substance must be kept away from children and elders.
- Movies negatively impact on children. Parents need to ensure that their children are watching positive movies.
- Youth engagement programmes can be initiated by Government.
- De-weaponisation device may be useful for protection of lives of children.
- Creation of job for youth can reduce the cases of suicides.

CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that the number of suicide incidents has significantly increased due to depression caused by socio-cultural and socio-economic factors. Majority of participants of this study argued that joblessness, unemployment, lack of basic educational and health facilities, number of suicide incidents has increased in all divisions of Sindh in general and in Mirpurkhas in particular. In this division during the last five years, suicide rate is recorded as highest.

Further, it is concluded that suicide by gunshot has also increased significantly in the division. In order to rehabilitate the survivors, government should establish First Aid Centres for providing medical and psychological support to survivors. Further, creation of employment opportunities, parental look after and care are important factors.

This study also concludes that awareness about the issue is also important for the reduction of suicide cases.

The study also indicates that the drugs and narcotics substance users have more chances of attempt to commit suicide.

Study found that suicidal trends are increasing in Mirpurkhas division during the year 2020. In Mirpurkhas highest number of suicide cases occurred during last five years. It is found in the study that 646 people killed themselves, out of this number, 356 were women.

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