

# The Effects of Psychosocial Factors on Incidence of Suicide Among Adolescent Students: A Review Analysis

Deepa P. N<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Vidhya N<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Ramaa Raju N<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Doctoral Research Scholar, Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, Srinivas University, Mangaluru, Karnataka, India

<sup>2</sup>Research Coordinator, Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, Srinivas University, Mangaluru, Karnataka, India

<sup>3</sup>Research Guide, Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, Srinivas University, Mangaluru, Karnataka, India,

## ABSTRACT

This study is a review of research studies related to the effects of psychosocial factors on incidence of suicide among adolescent students. The researcher has extensively reviewed research conducted in different countries with an aim to find whether there are similar or different psychosocial factors which affect suicidal behaviour. It was observed that economic factors, unemployment, poverty, lack of family support, family dynamics, dysfunctional relationship, parental neglect, abuse were some of the common psychosocial factors which influence adolescents to attempt suicide. The researcher found that the psychosocial factors that determine suicidal behaviour is similar across the world and could not identify any unique factor related to a specific culture. It was noted that there were gender differences among adolescents who experience suicidal ideation. A holistic management approach can act as an effective intervention in suicide prevention. The suggestions given by the researcher involve addressing societal expectations, family dynamics and economic disparities and that societies can work towards creating a nurturing environment that safeguards the mental well-being of the youth.

**Keyword:** Adolescents Suicide Attempt, Suicidal Ideation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Suicide among adolescents is a distressing phenomenon that demands careful examination of its contributing factors. This review aims to analyze the intricate interplay of psychosocial factors and their impact on the incidence of suicide in this vulnerable demography.

Adolescence is a pivotal stage marked by myriad challenges, including identity formation, peer relationships, academic pressures and family expectations. The confluence of these factors can create a crucible of stress and emotional turbulence for students, potentially rendering them susceptible to suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Understanding the psychosocial dynamics is essential for crafting effective preventive measures and support systems.

One pivotal aspect to consider is the role of peer relationships. Adolescents often derive a significant portion of their identity and self-worth from social interactions. Isolation, bullying or strained peer

relationships can significantly amplify feelings of loneliness and despair, contribute to the risk of suicide. Academic pressures and expectations always act as stressors and it also affects their sense of self.

Family dynamics also play a very crucial role in shaping the emotional well being of adolescents. Certain issues such as family conflicts, lack of support, dysfunctional relationships can contribute to a sense of hopelessness. Understanding how family factors intervene with the broader psychosocial landscape is paramount for developing comprehensive interventions.

Moreover the crucial influence of social media cannot be overlooked. The virtual and real can serve as both a source of connection and a breeding ground for comparison and cyberbullying. Exploring how online interactions impact the mental health of adolescents is imperative for holistic understanding of the psychosocial factors influencing suicide rates.

In the review analysis the existing literature will scrutinize and examine emerging patterns and insights, shedding light on the relationship between psychosocial factors and the incidence of suicide among adolescent students. By comprehensively examining these elements, we aim to contribute to the ongoing discourse on mental health by forming targeted interventions and support systems for this vulnerable population.

## 2. REVIEW ANALYSIS

Lakshmi Vijayakumar conducted a study titled Indian Research on Suicide (2010) [1]. The study focused on the rate of suicides in India for last three decades which was estimated to be 43%. The findings also state that women adopted distinct methods for committing suicide which is poisoning, hanging and self-immolation.

An empirical study was conducted by Ji-Won Hur, et.al (2011) [2] on The Mediating Effect of Psychosocial Factors on Suicidal Probability among Adolescents. This study focused on the role of psychosocial variances in the suicidal ideation of adolescents. The researcher investigated the mediating effects of psychosocial factors such as depression, anxiety, self esteem, stress and social support on the suicidal probability among high school students of South Korea. This study suggests that mediating relations affects the suicidal probability in adolescents.

G. David Batty, et.al. (2018) [3] conducted a study on Psychosocial Characteristics as Potential Predictors of Suicide in Adults; An Overview of the Evidence with New Results from Prospective Cohort Studies. The study analyzed that there was abundant evidence showing low economic position irrespective of economic status of a country which is associated with an increased risk in suicides. The findings suggest that the recent global economic recession has been responsible for an increase in suicide death. The researcher finds that most intervention strategies have traditionally not explored the modification of psychosocial factors partly because suicide risk is largely in its infancy.

J. Bilsen conducted a study on Suicide and Youth: Risk Factors (2018) [4] which identified suicide as the cause of death in late childhood and adolescents. Suicide not only results in direct loss of young lives but has disruptive psychosocial and adverse socio-economic effects. Key factors found in this study were mental disorders, previous suicide attempts, specific personality natures, genetic problems and family in combination with stressful psychosocial factors which leads to suicide.

A study was conducted by Jean M. Twenge (2020) [5] on Increases in Depression, Self-Harm and Suicide among US Adolescents after 2012 and Links to Technology Use: Possible Mechanisms. This study states that in the early 2000's in the US mental health issues among adolescents and young adults was on the

rise and it noted increase in depression, anxiety, loneliness, self-harm, suicidal ideation, suicide attempts and suicide. This pattern of behaviour was more prevalent among adolescent girls. Increase in the use of digital media and smart phone also influences mental health, as per the research of J.M. Twenge.

Valeria Saladino, et.al conducted a study on Perception of Cyber Bullying in Adolescence (2020)[6]. The study associates cyber bullying with the expansion of digital devices and the internet. Youth suffering from cyber bullying show psychopathological symptoms of anxiety, depression and social phobia that can lead to extreme acts of suicide. It points out that family and school atmosphere get affected by the pressure, sense of isolation and helplessness experienced by cyber victims. Youth engaged in aggressive behavior ignored the feelings and reactions of victims.

Lu-Yen-Anny Chen, et.al conducted a study on Suicide and Associated Psychosocial Correlates among University Students in Taiwan: A Mixed Methods Study (2020) [7]. The mixed method used both questionnaire survey and two open ended questions for exploring the qualitative data of 857 university students. One fourth of the participants were under poor mental health status and more than 60% experienced stressful events in their prior year. It is found that higher suicide risk and neurotic traits were consistent among university students. The researcher suggested suicide prevention strategies which highlight stress management for those with neurotic traits for early suicide risk identification.

Susan C. Campisi, et.al conducted a study on Suicidal Behaviors Among Adolescents from 90 Countries: A Pooled Analysis of the Global School – Based Student Health Survey (2020) [8]. The researcher examined the determinants of self reported suicidal ideation and suicide attempts among younger (13-15 years) and older (16-17 years) adolescents. The study finds that suicidal ideation was significantly higher among girls than boys where as attempts did not differ by age or sex. This study indicates that boys having no close friends and girls who were bullied showed increased suicide attempts.

Ranganathan, et.al conducted a study on Impact of Psychosocial Factors on Suicidal Ideation Among Adolescent Girls (2020) [9]. The study indicates that suicide is the major issue in a country like India and it is caused by psychological and social factors. A framework in which suicidal ideation is the result of psychosocial factors which include emotional intelligence, resilience, stress, and social factors that include family environmental situation, personal and social problems, and school problems was developed and hypothesized. The researcher adopted purposive sampling and selected 1218 female students from Public Schools in Tamil Nadu. The findings of this study indicate that emotional intelligence, school problem and family environment were the determinants of suicidal ideation. It also indicates that if there is high emotional intelligence then suicidal tendency would be less prevalent. The study observed that parental factors play a major role in the child's psychological wellbeing and unfavorable family environment results suicidal ideation among adolescent girls.

A study was conducted on Psychosocial Correlates of Suicidal Behavior among Adolescents Under Confinement Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Aguascalientes, Mexico: A Cross Sectional Population Survey, by Alicia Edith Hermosillo de la Torre, et.al (2021) [10]. The researcher evaluated that though suicide and suicidal behaviors were a global public health problem, the condition worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the vulnerable group including children, adolescents and young adults. It is noted that the study evaluated association of affective variables such as depression, hopelessness and anxiety, drug use such as alcohol, tobacco, and emotional intelligence attached with suicidal behaviors. A Survey was conducted on 8033 high school students, using a standardized questionnaire. To find out the associations between suicidal behavior and several covariates multinomial logistic regression

models was used for testing. The researcher found that approximately 21% of all students reported suicidal behaviour, 11% with a low lethality suicide attempt, 6% with self injuries and 4% with a high lethality suicide attempt. The variables used for the study associated with higher odds of suicidal behaviour included: female sex, depression, helplessness, anxiety, alcohol and tobacco use, childhood trauma and low self esteem.

A study was conducted on Finding the Link between Cyber Bullying and Suicidal Behavior Among Adolescents in Peninsular Malaysia by Siti Aisyah Mohd Fadhli, et.al (2022) [11]. The study was conducted on secondary school adolescents using a self-administered and anonymous online questionnaire. The findings point towards 17.1% prevalence of suicidal behavior among adolescents of which 11.9% had suicidal thoughts, 10.2% had a suicide plan and 8.4% had made a suicide attempt. It is found that an alarming number of adolescents in Peninsular Malaysia found to be involved in cyber bullying. Since the study was conducted during Covid-19 Pandemic the findings of this research make an important contribution in the report of current trends in cyber bullying and suicide among adolescents.

Meghan Romanelli, et.al conducted a study on Factors Associated with Distinct Patterns of Suicidal Thoughts, Suicide Plans and Suicide Among US Adolescents (2022) [12]. The sample of this study consisted of high school students and the researcher examined that different factors such as demographic characteristics, substance use, psychosocial factors associated with distinct patterns of suicide thoughts, plans and attempts results in suicide of adolescent students. Collection of data was done from National Youth Risk Behavior Survey of 2015, 2017 and 2019. Multinomial logistic regression analysis were conducted to examine suicide thoughts only, suicide thoughts and plans without suicide attempt, suicide attempts with thoughts or plans and suicide attempt without thoughts and plans. The findings of the study suggest screening for suicidal behaviors, which include factors that differentiate between varied suicidal expressions.

MyoungjinKulon, et.al conducted research on Factors Influencing Suicide Attempts of Adolescents with Suicidal Thoughts in South Korea; Using the 15<sup>th</sup> Korean Youth Risk Behavior Web Based Survey (KYRBS) in 2022 [13]. The study focused on physical and psychological factors, which includes smoking, drugs, alcohol use, sex related feelings and experiencing violence. The sample consisted of 7498 adolescents with thoughts and factors influencing suicidewhich was analyzed using a complex sample logistic analysis.

ZahirVally, et.al conducted study on The Prevalence Of Suicidal Behaviour and It's Associated Risk Factors Among School- Going Adolescents Resident In The United Arab Emirates in 2023 [14]. The researcher collected data using survey method from the global school of United Arab Emirates and found that suicidal behaviour remains unstudied in Middle Eastern contexts. A sample of 5826 adolescents were examined. The study indicated that elevated risk was significantly associated with anxiety difficulties and the experience of loneliness. The findings highlights the immense need to develop preventive Interventions, some of which may be school – delivered and targeted at parents.

Rachel Elizabeth conducted a study on Factors Associated with Distinct Patterns of Suicidal Thoughts, Suicidal Plans and Suicidal Attempts Among US Adolescents in 2024 [15]. The study identified the evidence of trends of suicide among adolescents' results affirmed that suicide rate has shown a alarming increase in recent years. The evidence shows that hanging and poisoning were the commonly selected methods used by adolescents. The most commonly reported risk factors mental health problems, traumatic issues, academic stress, social or life style factors, violence, economic distress and relationship factor.

The review of the studies quoted by this researcher reveals the effects of psychosocial factors on the incidence of suicide among adolescent students from countries across the world. All the studies indicate a complex interplay of various elements influencing suicide behaviour and affecting mental well-being of adolescents. One key finding is the impact of societal expectations on adolescents coupled with limited mental and physical health support which creates an environment where they experience more stress. Furthermore the influence of social media, peer pressures and body image concerns increase their feelings of inadequacy. The problems of adolescence is more over similar in many countries of the world, though culture, language and other factors differ. Family dynamics with dysfunctional relationships, with parental neglect and abuse play a crucial role in contributing to the heightened risk of suicide among adolescents. The lack of open communication channels within families often hinders the identification and management of mental health issues at an early stage. Economic factors such as poverty and unemployment act as stressors and countries. With limited resources face challenges in establishing comprehensive support systems for at-risk adolescents. The analysis also highlights gender disparities in the manifestation of psychosocial factors. In the reviews females tend to experience a suicidal ideation more frequently which is often linked to societal expectations and gender based violence. Males on the other hand, may exhibit risk taking behaviour driven by societal notions of masculinity. The studies have stressed that preventive measures must address these multifaceted issues. Comprehensive mental health education in schools, reducing academic pressures and fostering open communication within families are crucial components. Global collaboration is essential to share successful intervention strategies and establish a united force against the rising incidence of adolescents suicide. Governments, educational institutions and communities need to work together to implement policies that prioritize mental health and create a safety net for adolescents.

### 3. CONCLUSION

1. The psychosocial factors that determine suicidal behaviour is similar across the world. The researcher could not identify any unique factor related to a specific culture.
2. The researcher noted gender differences among adolescents who experience suicidal ideation.
3. The effects of psychosocial factors on the incidence suicide among adolescent students demands a holistic approach to be managed.
4. By addressing societal expectations, family dynamics and economic disparities, societies can work towards creating a nurturing environment that safeguards the mental well-being of youth.

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