

# SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND SUICIDAL BEHAVIORS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A STUDY OF OPINION EVALUATION OF UNIVERSITY GRADUATES ON DEPRESSIVE DISORDERS IN ISLAMABAD

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*ABSTRACT: Suicide is becoming the most growing issues among the young generation. The reasons observed during this study were that depression is the main key area for youngsters to commit suicide. Existing literature shows that suicide rate becoming higher among youth, especially in Muslim community around the world. Objective of the study was to answer the question that depression among youth leading to commit suicide. Students of two well-known educational institutions of Islamabad, Quid-i-Azam University and Comsats Institute of Information Technology was selected as participants. By using convenient sampling technique respondents were selected for this study. Results shows that 67.3% of the respondents were belong to the age category between 21-25 years. Respondents were at the level of getting master degree and B.S education from respective institutions. 44% respondents reported helplessness, 16% responses in aggression category and 36.7% respondent's restlessness was a major cause of depression. Finding at the responsible institutions for depression were, in 35.4% cases family institutions, in 22.7% cases educational institutions and in 37.4% cases economic institutions were major responsible institutions to create depression among youth. Religious teachings can play important role. In this regard, the government can establish the counseling cells in the universities and NGOs can prioritize psychological treatments and counseling among the university students to guide the graduate to adopt the more realistic life styles among them*

Key Word: Depression, Suicide, Youth, Institution

## INTRODUCTION

The Holy Qur'an says: "...And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allah is Most Merciful..." (An-Nisa 4:29)

Two-thirds of the country's population is reportedly suffering from depression, and a trend of suicide among the people has seen a sharp increase in the first quarter of this year. Lack of financial resources, insecurity and identity problems have pushed the suicide rate up by 24 percent as compared to last year. Professor Dr Muhammad Riaz Bhatti, one of the key psychiatrics in Pakistan, told Daily times that considering the ratio between those who attempt suicide, men had more suicidal tendencies than women, as they are more aggressive and depressed due to financial problems.<sup>1</sup>

Treatment compliance and endpoint measures of suicidal ideation and depression have been shown to be superior in a family intervention plus an educational intervention at intake in the emergency room, relative to the family intervention alone for adolescent Latina suicide attempters.<sup>2</sup>

Suicide and suicidal behavior is depreciated in all revealed religions and great world cultural traditions. The civic and cultural mind set encourages human to cope with the depression in a more practical manner instead of avoid fighting and facing the harsh social realities and difficulties. All religious traditions and cultures suppose its members to lead realistic modes of life instead of mere day dreaming. It is observed that the complexities of social life, demands of

modernity and unrealistic fashioning of youth leads to the increase of depressive behaviors among youngsters. It is usually observed the today's youth is more ambitious than ever therefore over ambitiousness leads to depressions and later on becoming suicidal.

Major depression has 17% lifetime prevalence in the U.S. general population<sup>3</sup>, yet rates of major depression differ among ethnic groups<sup>3-8</sup>. Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States<sup>9</sup>, and most suicide victims suffer from major depression around the time of death<sup>10-12</sup>. Thus, rates of major depression are related to suicide rates<sup>13,14</sup>. The study will answer the question: Depression among youth leading to commit suicide.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study consisted of two universities of Islamabad i.e. Comsats Institute of Information Technology and Quaid-i-Azam University. These two institutions had been selected out of 15 institutions of Islamabad. A sample of 150 respondents was selected by using convenient sampling technique. Keeping in consideration the objectives of the study, an interview guide was constructed. Interview guide that was used in this research has comprised questions that cover all concerning issues. Each respondent was explained about the objectives of the study.

## RESULTS

**Table.1 Age distribution of respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19-20	49	32.7
21-23	77	51.3
24-25	24	16
Total	150	100

Table.1 shows the respondents age distribution. Between the age group 19-20, 32.7% participate in this research. 51.3% of the respondents belong to age group 21-23, which shows the maximum percentage among respondents. While 16% respondents falls in the category of 24-25.

**Table.2 Current Educational status among respondents**

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
M.Sc.	50	33.3
M.BA.	46	30.7
B.S.	54	36
Total	150	100

Above table shows the figure of current education status of the respondents of this research. 64% respondents were getting their Master's level education in Quid-i-Azam and Comsats institution. While, 36% respondents were seeking their degrees in B.S Program.

**Table.3 Type of Depression reported by respondents**

Type of depression	Frequency	Percentage
Helplessness	66	44
Aggression	24	16
Restlessness	55	36.7
Others	5	3.3
Total	150	100

Table.3 focused on the type of depression reported by the respondents during this research. The major finding shows in the table that, 44% of the respondents were of the view that helplessness was a major reason to commit suicide among youngsters. Aggression was the third major category of depression reported by the participants. And second major depression was 36.7% that is restlessness during their routine life.

**Table.4 Responsible Institutions of Depression**

Institutions responsible for depression	Frequency	Percentage
Family	53	35.4
Educational	34	22.7
Economic	56	37.4
Friends	2	1.3
Society	2	1.3
Others	2	1.3
All	1	.6
Total	150	100

Above table shows the category of the institutions were being responsible for depression among youth. Family was the second higher percentage as an institution held responsible to create depression, educational institutions

were at number three in ranking by getting 22.7% responses and first major institution was economic institution with 37.4% responses. These results show that family, educational and economic institutions were more affective key partners to raise the level of depression.

## DISCUSSION

Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a Muslim country and as per daily news reports, unfortunately, the suicide graph among Muslims, as compared to other minority communities, shows an increasing trend. Therefore, it would be essential to analyze and create awareness about this condemned act in the light of Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. As already cited above, this act is condemned in all the revealed religions, including Islam, which has crystal clear divine instructions about this sinful act, which is detrimental to soul's eternal journey after death.<sup>15</sup>

Present research depicted that depression was a major issue among the youth of Universities, which leads them to take decision to end their lives and commit suicide. The basic factors responsible to create depression and raise the level of depression among youth were the family matter, educational hurdles and economic problem faced by them during their lives. Unfortunately, the ratio of suicide among young generation is notable. The literature of previous one to two years categorically mentioned the growing chart of suicide in developing countries.

In a 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported that during the past year, 19% of high school students had ideation, 15% made a plan, 9% made an attempt, and 2.6% made a medically serious suicide attempt<sup>16</sup>. Suicide is among the leading causes of death among 10- to 19-year-olds in developed countries, and accounts for more deaths than all natural causes combined<sup>16,17</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

Seeing the results of the study, there is a need on behalf of the government and non-governmental organizations especially the civil society to come forth to play its role to focus on extending the social counseling to the youth. The youth is also requiring the proper and appropriate socio-cultural and religious measures to increase awareness about the challenges of social life and its remedies. In this regard, religious teachings can play important role. In this regard, the government can establish the counseling cells in the universities and NGOs can prioritize psychological treatments and counseling among the university students to guide the graduate to adopt the more realistic life styles among them.

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