

PERCEIVED CAUSES OF SUICIDAL IDEATION AMONG STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY, MALETE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The rate that students commit suicide/attempting suicide in tertiary institution of learning in the world today as well as Nigeria is increasing and this has been a thing of concern to stakeholders in education. Based on this, the study examines the perceived causes of suicidal ideation among students in Kwara State University, Malete Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. All the undergraduate students in Kwara State University, Malete were the population for the study. The respondents in the study were 180 students studying in Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria, they were randomly selected. drafted questionnaire was given to lectures in the college of Education, the instruments used was a two likert scaled questionnaire titled "students perceived causes of suicidal ideation questionnaire" which was validated by lecturers of the college, and reliably tested at ($r=0.71$). One research question was generated; one hypothesis was raised and tested at 0.05 levels of significance. Data gathered were analysed using frequency count, percentage, mean, and T-test. The results of the study revealed that students perceived that low academic performance, depression and misused of drug were the major causes of suicidal ideation. It was also shown that there was no significant difference on causes of suicidal ideation among male and female respondents ($t_{cal}= 0.91$, $P>0.05$). Based on the finding, the study recommended that school management should organized counseling class for students regularly at different college/faculty especially for those with low academic performance.

Keywords: Suicide, Suicidal Ideation

Introduction

In recent years series of deaths have been recorded in tertiary institutions worldwide which amounted to over one million deaths due to suicide attempt. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) (2016) stated suicide is the second leading cause of death among aged 15-29 years approximately 11.4% per 100000 people while in Nigeria is put at 9.5% per 100,000 people. For this it has been a thing of concern to stakeholder in Nigeria system of Education to find out what could be the cause of suicide attempt.

Suicide refers to the act of intentionally causing one's own death. It was from two Latin words "sui" and "caedere" which together translate to "kill oneself". Mental disorder, personality disorder (alcoholism), some suicide is impulsive acts as a result of stress one undergo, for examples financial difficulties, troubles with relationships or bullying. Pereira & Cardoso (2015) reported that suicidal ideation is an important element in a process called suicidal behaviour which can later result into suicide attempt and committing suicide. Suicidal ideation refers to process by which students attempt to commit suicide when they are performing below expectation. Suicidal ideation occurs in all age groups but common among children and adolescents with severe mood disorders, National Crime Bureau (2005) reported that majority of suicide attempt in India are by those below the age of 30 years.

Betterham, Calear and Christensen (2003) stated that suicide is a thing that can be avoidable; it shows that all avoidable measures have not been yielding any progress. Statistically, 17% of students reported attempting suicide in the previous months, 14% of students always have a plan attempting suicide in the previous months and 8% of students attempted suicide one or more times in the previous year (Centre for Disease Control and prevention (CDC), 2013).

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Therefore, Anderson & Smith, (2005) and Schwartz, (2006) reported that suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15-to-24 years olds students and the second leading cause of death among college students respectively.

In a report given by World Health Organization (WHO) (2016), it was estimated that 804,000 people committed suicide in the world including young people of aged 15 to 29 years, which was calculated to be 8.5% of deaths in this age group worldwide. Evidence of the growth in this population segment is concerned, considering the possibility of years to be lived, productivity and transformation in the lives of these young people who are entering the academic world; and suicide is the second leading cause of death among institution students, second only to self-inflicted injuries (Taliaferro, Rienzo, Pigg, Miller and Dodd, 2015). In a study conducted by Jena and Sidhartha (2004) in Delhi, it was found that suicidal ideation rate was 21.7%, it was reported to be common among male adolescent students than female. A divergent view, Cheung and Dewa (2006) revealed that female students have suicidal ideation than their male students; similarly, Shaffer & Waslick (2002) reported that adolescent female students develop suicidal ideation than male adolescent.

Numerous factors were identified in the literature that causes suicidal ideation among students in higher institution of learning; this indicates that it is a multi-factorial/ multidimensional event (Pereira and Cardoso, 2015). Gvion, Horesh, Levi-Belz and Apter (2015) stated factors that trigger suicidal ideation process; these are hopelessness, impulsivity, aggression, body perception, communication difficulties and lack of social belonging. Among other factors listed by researchers that can cause suicidal ideation were problems with the law break up with a significant other, bullying or victimization, academic crisis or school failure or forced or extended separation from friends or family (Leiberman, Poland and Cowan, 2006). Moreso, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service (2012) opined that worthlessness, depression and hopelessness are common thought distortions associated with suicidal ideation. CDC (2013) revealed that family conflict, abuse or trauma, substance abuse, lack of social support, and unsuccessful attempts to access mental health were factors that can cause suicide ideation. Mackenzie, Wiegel, Mundt, Saewye and Heiligenstein, (2011) revealed that as demographic and socioeconomic variables, sexual orientation, religious practice, suicidal behaviours in the family and among friends, alcohol consumption and depression have also been shown in the literature as causes of suicidal ideation.

The percentage rate of suicide attempt among adolescents worldwide is being put at 12%, in Nigeria, the Suicide Research and Preventive Initiative (SURPIN) has found that about one-fifth of suicide cases seen at its affiliated institution are those aged 13-19 years and that over 50% of the crisis calls received through its hotline are from those aged 13-29 years; 27.8% were students. In a study by the Suicide Research and Preventive Initiative (SURPIN) conducted in Lagos State University Hospital, out of 66 suicide victims cumulatively recorded in 2018, only about 37.9% committed suicide through conventional means while nearly 62.1% bit the dust by consuming poison often sniper. Based on the aforementioned causes and statistics of suicide attempt in Nigeria and world-wide, the present study tried to examine causes of suicidal ideation among students in Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria.

The following research questions and hypothesis were generated for this study:

Research Question

1. What are the factors that cause suicidal ideation among students in Kwara State University, Malete Kwara State Nigeria?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference on the causes of suicidal ideation among male and female respondents.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study; the reason for this is that the study intended to seek the opinion of respondents on the causes of suicidal ideation in Kwara state University, Malete Nigeria. Students of Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria were the population for the study. One hundred and eighty (180) students were selected using random sampling technique as respondents; they were gotten from six colleges in Kwara State University then, proportionate sampling technique was used to select thirty students from each college. One research question was stated and one hypothesis was formulated. A questionnaire tagged “students’ perceived Causes of Suicidal Ideation Questionnaire” was used as the instrument, the instrument contains two Sections, section A and B. Section A contains demographic information of respondents, while section B contains 10 items of 2-likert scaled to elicit responses on the causes of suicidal ideation: Yes and NO, the instruments used was validated by lecturers of the college, and reliably tested at ($r=0.71$), which indicate that the instrument was reliable. The researchers then administered the questionnaires and collected them back on the spot. The data gathered is analyzed using percentage and mean for research questions and t-test for the hypothesis.

Results

Table 1. Table showing distribution of respondents based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	83	46.1
Female	97	53.9
Total	180	100.0

Table 1 showed the gender distribution of the respondents, eighty-three (83) of the respondents representing 46.1% were male while ninety-seven (97) of the respondents representing 53.9% were female. From the analysis above, it is evident that female respondents were found to be more in number than male respondents.

Research Question: What are the factors that cause suicidal ideation among students in Kwara State University, Malete Kwara State Nigeria?

Table 2. Showing the percentage and mean distribution of the factors that cause suicidal ideation among students in Kwara State University, Malete Kwara State Nigeria

S/N	ITEM	YES	NO	MEAN	RANK
1	Suicide ideation can be caused by acute financial crisis	91(50.6)	89(49.4)	1.51	6 TH
2	Suicide ideation can be cause by the conflict with parents	130(72.2)	50(27.8)	1.72	4 TH
3	Students have thought of suicide when depressed	131(72.8)	49(27.2)	1.73	3 RD
4	Students suffering from an emotional imbalance can have suicide ideation	47(26.1)	133(73.9)	1.27	8 TH
5	Students develop the thought of suicide when he/she is aggressive	63(35.0)	117(65.0)	1.35	7 TH
6	Low academic performance can make a student attempt suicide	145(80.6)	35(19.4)	1.81	1 ST
7	Misused of drug can make students attempt suicide	145(80.6)	35(19.4)	1.81	1 ST

8	Suicide is last resort when one has severe incurable disease	37(20.6)	143(79.4)	1.21	9 TH
9	Suicide ideation can be caused by being jilted by love one	38(21.1)	142(78.9)	1.21	9 TH
10	Suicide ideation is as a result of being hopeless	128(71.1)	52(28.9)	1.71	5 TH

Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages

Table 2 showed the causes of suicidal ideation among students in Kwara State University, Malete, Kwara state. It was revealed that ninety-one (91) students agreed that acute financial crisis causes suicidal ideation while eighty-nine (89) students disagreed, 130 students agreed that conflict with parents causes suicidal ideation while 50 students disagreed. Also, 131 students perceived that suicidal ideation is caused as a result of depression while 49 students disagreed, 47 students perceived that emotional imbalance causes suicidal ideation while 133 students disagreed, 63 students believed that aggressiveness causes suicidal ideation while 117 students disagreed. Furthermore, 145 students perceived that low academic performance causes suicidal ideation while 35 students disagreed, 145 students believed that misused of drug causes suicidal ideation while 35 students disagreed, it was also revealed that 37 students agreed that severe incurable disease causes suicidal ideation while 143 students disagreed, 38 students agreed that jilted by loved one causes suicidal ideation while 142 students disagreed and lastly 128 students perceive that hopelessness causes suicidal ideation while 52 students disagreed. Based on the ranking, it could be concluding that low academic performance, misused of drug and depression top the ranking, which mean that the three are the most causes of suicidal ideation in Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria.

Hypothesis: there is no significant different on the causes of suicidal ideation in Kwara State University, Malete based on gender.

Table 3. T-test showing significant different on the causes of suicidal ideation in Kwara State University, Malete based on gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Tcal	df	Sig	Decision
Causes of suicidal ideation	Male	83	15.95	2.93	0.91	178	0.68	Not Sig
	Female	97	16.34	2.78				

From table 3 showed the summary of t-test result showing significant different on the causes of suicidal ideation in Kwara State University Malete Nigeria. It was revealed that male students had mean 15.95 and standard deviation 2.93 while female students had mean 16.34 and standard deviation 2.78, the tcal was 0.91, degree of freedom 178 and significant level of 0.68 ($P > 0.05$). This implies that there was no significant difference on the causes of suicidal ideation in Kwara State University, Malete Nigeria based on gender. However, the null hypothesis that states that there was no significant difference on the causes of suicidal ideation based on gender was accepted.

Discussion of Findings

Finding of the study revealed that low academic performance, depression and misused of drug are the major causes of suicidal ideation among students in Kwara State University Malete. This result is in line with the finding of Leiberman, Polan and Cowan (2006) who reported that school failure is the major cause of suicidal ideation among students in higher institution of learning; also the finding conformed to the finding of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service (2012) who revealed that depression among students in tertiary institution is the cause of suicidal ideation and CDC (2013) opined that substance abuse (misused of drug) causes suicidal ideation among students in schools. The second finding of the study showed that there is no significant difference on the causes of suicidal ideation

in Kwara State University based on gender; this is in accordance with the finding of CDC (2013) found that there is no significant difference on the causes of suicidal ideation based on gender.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the results of this study, the study concluded that low academic performance, depression and misused of drug are the major causes of suicidal ideation in tertiary institution of learning while other causes like hopelessness, financial crisis, emotional imbalance, conflict with parents among others can also cause suicidal ideation. Therefore, the study recommended that school management should organize counseling classes for students regularly at different college/faculty

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