

Academic Stress and Suicidal Ideation among Students of Professional and Non-Professional Courses

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive world, students face more stress than ever related to studies, examination, peer, teachers or parent's pressure. The purpose of the Present research was to study the Academic Stress and Suicidal ideation among Students of Professional and non-professional course students. The Descriptive Study Design was employed, in which 60 Professional and 60 non-professional Course students were included. The data on Suicidal ideation was obtained by using Suicidal Ideation Scale developed by Devendra Singh Sisodia and Vibhuti Bhatnagar (2011), Academic Stress Scale by Rajendran and kaliappan (1990). The sample chosen were in the age group between 19-21 years. The obtained data was analysed with the help of independent 't' test. The results indicated that Significant differences were found between professional and non-professional course students in Academic Stress and Suicidal ideation.

Keywords: Academic Stress, Suicidal ideation and Professional and non-professional course students.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional stage from childhood to adulthood and during this period, adolescents experience many changes. These include physical growth, new social relations, and also emotions that can put a great deal of pressure on them. Without social and parental support, this pressure can put adolescents at risk of suicide.

Many factors can lead an adolescent to suicidal behaviour, and these can be divided into two categories: psychological problems (loneliness, worry, hopelessness) and social-environmental factors such as low, or lack of, parental or peer support, harmful alcohol and drug use, smoking, and being bullied or sexually abused as mentioned, psychological problems and social-environmental factors related to an individual's life history are the main risk factors for suicide. In contrast, parental support, supervision, understanding adolescents' problems and worry, and peer support at

schools have all been recognized as protective factors against suicidal ideation.

According to the latest Suicide Report of the World Health Organization (WHO), the suicide rate (per 100 000) in 2012 among 15-29-year-olds in Iran for both sexes was 7.8. Broken down by sex, it was 10.00 for males and 5.5 for females. The rate of suicide in the general population varies from region to region. According to the Iranian Forensic Medicine Bureau, the national rate of suicide for males was 5.7 and 3.1 for females per 100,000 but in the western provinces of Iran, the rate fluctuates between 40 and 66 cases per 100,000.

Mental health conditions such as: hopelessness and irritability, loose interest in personal appearance, change in sleeping patterns, anxious towards death as to leave friends and family are all associated with factors to suicidal ideation as indicated by all of Chehil and Kutcher (2012) together with Hawton, Saunders and O'Connor (2012). Moreover, significant changes in behaviour or significant loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities, fatigue or loss of energy, sudden change in attendance, reduction in the quality of work, drug abuse, reckless behaviour and unexplained accidents, loss of employment, loss of valued relationship such as divorce or separation, talking, giving away possessions, sudden interest in personal wills or life insurance are all clues of suicidal intentions (Schneidman, 2008).

Past history of attempted suicide, the availability of suicidal means and genetic factors are another leading cause of suicidal ideation. Twenty percent of suicidal act had a previous attempt and 1% of them complete suicide within a year as indicated by Chang, Gitlin, and Patel (2011). Households with firearms reported to have suicide or suicidal thoughts more than those without firearms (Miller, Azrael, & Barber, 2012). The genetic factors accounted for 38% to 55% of suicidal behaviours among psychiatric clinical samples according to (Brent, & Melhem, (2008).

Perceived physical or sexual abuse, shame and psychological pain are highly related to suicidal ideation and intent. According to Brent and Melhem, (2008), sexual abuse consists of 20% of the overall risk factors of suicide. Unbearable physical pain, devotion to cause of heroism, loyalty to a leader or spouse, loss of loved one, loss of a job, or social isolation can also be also significant risk factors (Chehil, & Kutcher, 2012).

Unemployment, homelessness, hopelessness and discrimination may lead to suicidal ideation as reported by to Qin, Agerbo and Mortensen, (2003). Escape of being bullied is another cause to suicidal ideation as indicated by Cox, Abramson, Devine, Patricia and Hollon (2012). Older adults may perceive themselves being a burden on others and that may increase their suicidal thoughts according to the

viewpoint of Van Orden and Conwell, (2011). Moreover, people who have never been married are also associated with suicidal ideation according to Chang, Gitlin, and Patel (2011).

In India, the courses of study generally fall within two categories, viz., professional and nonprofessional courses. Entry to professional courses like medical or engineering is very tough and the admission process requires high level of academic excellence and persistence but these courses ensure job security. On the other hand, entry to non-professional course is comparatively easier but these courses do not ensure procurement of a good job immediately on completion of the course. Most of the students want to study in professional courses and they may or may not succeed in procuring admission. Hence, students enter in nonprofessional courses either by choice or due to failing in getting admission in professional courses. Thus, entry to non-professional courses may lead different kinds of stress.

Nabanita Banerjee and Dr. Ishita Chatterjee (2016) The present study findings revealed that the students of 3rd semester are more stressed and prone to suicidal ideation than 1st semester students as well as significant positive correlation exists between academic stress and suicidal ideation but mental well-being is negatively correlated with both of the variables - academic stress and suicidal ideation.

Aradhna Shukla, Dr. Rupali Joshi (2017) The present study findings revealed that significant difference on academic, family, financial, hostel and overall stress areas as the mean scores of non-professional students was significantly higher among non-professional students than professional students.

NEED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY:

In the present competitive age, both professional and non-professional students face many kinds of stressful situations. Factors like parental preference for professional course for their children, inability to fulfil these expectations, financial demands of the professional courses, anxieties regarding future job prospects, lack of support & facilities available at the chosen educational institution, lack of conducive study atmosphere are likely to contribute to the stress among college students. Hence, the present study intends to find out the Academic Stress and suicidal ideation between Professional and non-Professional course students.

Methodology

PROBLEM:

To study the Academic Stress and suicidal ideation among Students of Professional and non-professional course students.

Objectives

Keeping the problem of the study in view, the following objectives were drawn:

- 1) To study the difference in Academic Stress between professional and non-professional course students.
- 2) To study the difference in Suicidal ideation between professional and non-professional course students.

HYPOTHESES

To understand the difference between professional and non-professional course students on the variables mentioned, the following hypotheses were framed.

- 1) There will be a significant difference in Academic Stress between professional and non-professional course students.
- 2) There will be a significant difference in Suicidal ideation between professional and non-professional course students.

VARIABLES

- **Independent variables**
Professional and non-professional course students
- **Dependent variables**
Academic Stress
Suicidal ideation

INCLUSION CRITERIA

- Students belonging to the age group between 19-21 were included

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- under Graduate Students only.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- 1) Students from broken family, divorced families.
- 2) Students who are mentally or physically challenged.

TOOLS

- 1) Semi structured interview schedule.
- 2) Academic Stress Scale by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1990)
- 3) Suicidal ideation scale by Devendra Singh Sisodia and Vibhuti Bhatnagar (2011)

RESEARCH DESIGN

Between groups design was used for the study.

SAMPLE

The Purposive Sampling technique was used to select the sample. On the whole, a total of 120 students were chosen as the sample. Among them 60 Professional and 60 Non-professional course students which included male and female subjects.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data was analysed with the help of descriptive statistics, mean SD, independent 't'-test. The statistical analysis was done with the help of SPSS 20.0 version.

Table 1 Showing the mean, S.D and ‘t’ value between professional and non-professional course students in Academic Stress.

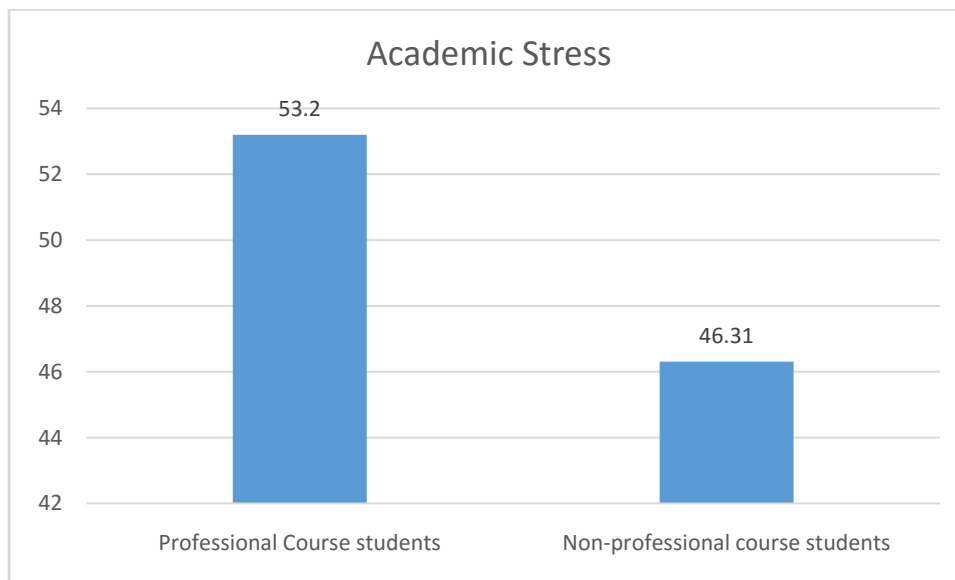
Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	‘t’ value
Academic Stress	Professional students	60	85.26	12.12	4.54**
	Non-professional students	60	75.31	11.87	

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table-1 Shows the result of Academic Stress between Professional and Non-Professional course students. As per the above table, the obtained mean is 85.26 and 75.31 with the standard deviation being 12.12 and 11.87 respectively and obtained ‘t’ value is 4.54 which revealed that it is Significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the hypothesis which states that

“There will be a Significant difference in Academic Stress between Professional and Non-Professional course students” has been accepted.

The Graph that follows depicts the mean difference in Academic Stress between Professional and Non-Professional course students.



Graph-1 depicting the mean scores of Academic Stress between Professional and Non-Professional course students

Table 2 Showing the mean, S.D and ‘t’ value between professional and non-professional course students in Suicidal ideation.

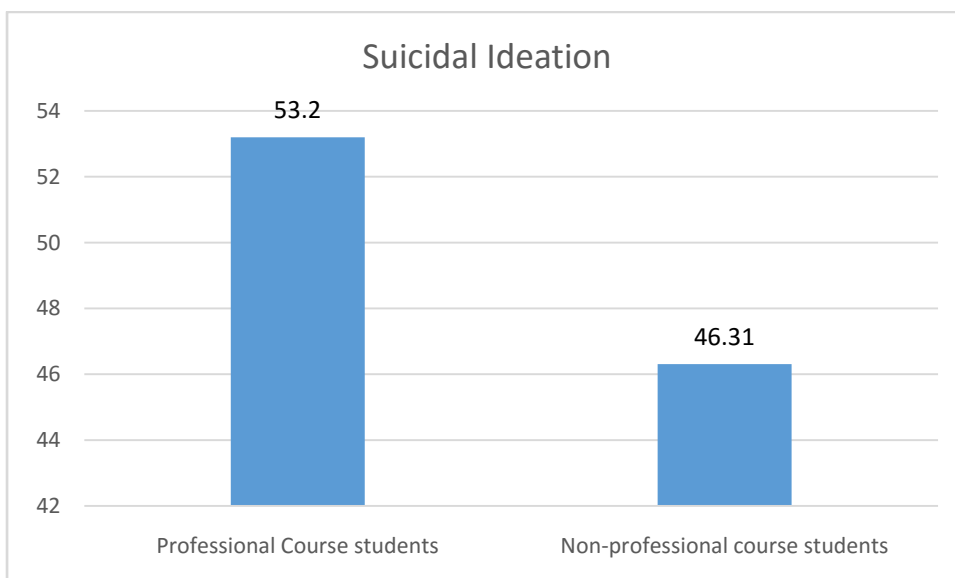
Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Suicidal ideation	Professional students	60	53.20	10.86	3.86**
	Non-professional students	60	46.31	8.80	

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table-2 Shows the result of Suicidal ideation between Professional and Non-Professional course students. As per the above table, the obtained mean is 53.20 and 46.31 with the standard deviation being 10.60 and 8.80 respectively and obtained 't' value is 3.86 which revealed that it is Significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the hypothesis which states that

“There will be a Significant difference in Suicidal ideation between Professional and Non-Professional course students” has been accepted.

The Graph that follows depicts the mean difference in Suicidal ideation between Professional and Non-Professional course students.



Graph-2 depicting the mean scores of Suicidal ideation between Professional and Non-Professional course students

CONCLUSION

The present research aimed at studying the Academic Stress and suicidal ideation between Students of Professional and non-professional

course students. Based on the finding of the present study, the following conclusions were drawn. Significant differences were found between professional and non-professional

course students in Academic Stress and Suicidal ideation. The present study has made an attempt to analyse the Academic Stress and Suicidal ideation among the students of professional and non-professional courses. The findings of study can be used to formulate training the wellbeing and life skills training programmes for promoting positive aspects of mental health as well as to minimize suicidal ideation among the young people. Educational Psychologists, School and college counsellors may use such programs as a part of their counselling services for their students.

LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY:

- 1) The study was conducted on a sample of 120 students only.
- 2) The study was restricted to the colleges of Professional and Non-Professional Courses of Bangalore City only.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

- 1) The study was conducted only on a limited sample of 120 students. To establish validity and reliability, further study can be conducted on a larger sample

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Recommendations: Implications for Practice:

This study may help counsellors understand that there are many contribute factors to suicidal ideation among college students, and may shed the lights on those students who most likely being at risk. There are a vast number of suicidal ideation indicators among college students and, Counsellors and other caregivers should become aware of the potential factors that can predict students at risk. The prevalence of students' self-esteem, suicidal ideation and the relationship between those two variables can give the implication and the clarification to the misunderstanding of suicidal ideation and its relationship to students' self-esteem, by the knowledge given about the most influential factors leading to suicidal ideation among students in Jordan. Moreover, the study increases the awareness and the knowledge bouts suicidal ideation in order to provide a guideline for possible prevention program or treatments for those students who are experiencing the ideas of suicidal ideation. This study came to existence as an attempt to raise the awareness about suicidal ideations' risk factors and prevention so that college students in crisis may be recognized and helped or carried out at the Deanship of Students' Affairs. Other implication to this study, it may help others in the field of counselling psychology in how to recognize the risk factors, the signs of suicidal ideation and develop a plan of action to prevent this psychological and social issue. Conclusion and Implications for Future Research: Further Avenue of future research

can examine the relation between self-esteem, depression and suicidal ideation. Further research needs to be conducted to determine other factors influence suicidal ideation among children specially those who are at adolescent stage of development or other group of population. Conducting similar studies like this study are not important in themselves, but they are important as an attempt to develop strategies to identify students at risk for suicidal ideation that may lead to suicide. College students are having suicidal ideation whither we like it or not. Helping counsellors and other caregivers save the lives of students is very important wither they have low level or high level of self-esteem. It is equally important to conduct further researches to increase our knowledge regarding suicide detection and prevention programs to deal with student's negative thoughts.

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