

# Factors Associated with the Suicidal Tsunami as a Mental Illness: Findings from an Epidemiological Study

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## Abstract

Suicide is the act of intentionally causing one's own death. There are multi-dimensional socio ecological risk factors in the occurrence of suicide, the form of non-natural death on the earth. The country Bangladesh by name, a South Asian developing country is taken on consideration to search out the factors to cause suicidal Tsunami avoiding jeering at the suicide happening. This cross sectional study revealed that 42.3% of suicidal victims belonged to the age group 18 to 27 years. It is found that most of them were married (74.6%) coming 74.6% from nuclear families. About 40.8% victims were up to the PSC level education achievers to contribute 38% household workers. Most of the victims (69%) were from rural areas and the study also showed that most of the incidents i.e., 21.1% occurred at midnight, 19.7% at day and 12.7% at night while maximum 46.5% victims used the process of hanging, 33.8% poisoning and 9.9% giving body under train. Most of the people (31%) committed suicide for conjugal life conflict, 16.9% for family conflicts, 14.1% for economic crisis and 9.9% for love related matter.

## Keywords

Suicidal Tsunami, Socio Ecological Factors, Epidemiological Study, Suicidal Victims, Bangladesh

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## 1. Introduction

Suicide is a major problem of human beings because any animal can die by disease or can be killed by an outside agency but only the human beings can kill themselves [1]. Suicide means not only the act of taking one's own life [2] but also one who dies from his own hand and one who attempts or has a tendency to commit suicide. It refers to the behaviour of individuals or groups which may bring about their own destruction [3]. Suicide is the act of intentionally causing one's own death [4]. It is often carried out as a result of despair, the cause of which is frequently attributed to a mental disorder such as depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder alcoholism or

drug abuse [5] as well as stress factors such as financial difficulties, troubles with interpersonal relationships and bullying [6]. The most commonly used method of suicide varies from country to country and is partly related to availability. Common methods include hanging, pesticide poisoning and firearms [7, 8]. Suicide resulted in 842,000 deaths in 2013 which is up from 712,000 deaths in 1990 [9]. This makes it the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death worldwide [10]. Rates of completed suicides are higher in men than in women, with males three to four times more likely to kill themselves than females [11]. There are an estimated 10 to 20 million non-fatal attempted suicides every year [1]. Non-fatal suicide attempts may lead to injury and long-term disabilities. Attempts are more common in young people and

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four times more common in females in the Western world [12, 13]. WHO defines suicide as the act of deliberately killing one self and estimates over 800,000 deaths from suicide and it is the 15<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death that accounts 1.4% of all deaths globally in 2012 [14]. According to a report by the World Health Organization 19,697 people committed suicide in Bangladesh in 2011 [15]. The rate is 128.08 people per 100, 000 commit suicide in Bangladesh every year [16].

Suicide is a criminal, sinful or morally wrong act [17]. According to section 305 of Penal Code 1860 (Existing law of Bangladesh) where if any person under 18 years of age and insane person, any delirious person, any idiot or any person in a state of intoxication commits suicide, whoever abets the commission of such suicide shall be punished with death or transportation for life, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years and shall also be liable to fine. According to Section 306 if any person commits suicide, whoever abets the commission of such suicide, shall be punished with imprisonment either description for a term which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine [18]

Suicide is social as well as public health problem but it is preventable mental illnesses [19-21]. People those who are liable to commit suicide find their life hopeless, helpless and despair. It becomes unbearable to them [22] and the objective of the study was to form their life in decent form shirking the factors liable to lead the mind on going suicide [23]. Therefore, the current study was conducted to assess different social, ecological, economic, family, environmental factors and so on leading the min committing suicide.

## 2. Methodology

The cross-sectional study was piloted at Jhenidah district in Bangladesh framing a sum of 71 cases with a ratio of 54.9% female and 45.1% male victims taking using the purposive sampling method. A planned questionnaire was developed containing both the closed and open ended query to collect data. The questionnaire was pretested in areas far away from the sample areas and revised according to the feedback gained in the field level. The questionnaire was formed to obtain the relevant information considering personal, household, social and economic and environmental details. The data were processed to undergo statistical analysis using SPSS 16 windows program. MS Word, MS Excel were used to represent the tabular, graphical and chart icon and the data were edited in case of sighting discrepancy (doubt entry, wrong entry etc.).

## 3. Results

It was observed that 42.3% of victims committed suicide

whose were belonged the age group 18 to 27 years while 54.9% were female and religion of 80.3% were Islam. It is also found that most of them were married (74.6%) while 74.6% from nuclear family and education of 40.8% were up to PSC and 38% were household worker while 35.2% victim's father were farmer (table 1).

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic characteristics of the victims.

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years)		
<17	13	18.3%
18-27	30	42.3%
28-37	14	19.7%
38-47	8	11.3%
48-57	3	4.2%
>58	3	4.2%
Sex		
Male	32	45.1%
Female	39	54.9%
Religion		
Islam	57	80.3%
Hindu	14	19.7%
Marital status		
Married	53	74.6%
Unmarried	18	25.4%
Familytype		
Nuclear	44	62%
Extend	37	38%
Educational status of the victim		
Illiterate	9	12.7%
PSC	29	40.8%
SSC	21	29.6%
HSC	4	5.6%
>HSC	8	11.3%
Occupation of the victim		
Farmer	5	7.0%
Service	2	2.8%
Business	6	8.5%
Household worker	27	38%
Day labor	14	19.7%
Student	17	23.9%
Father's Occupation		
Farmer	25	35.2%
Service	7	9.9%
Labor	8	11.3%
Business	19	26.8%
Dead	12	16.9%
Father's Income(BDT)		
1000-3000	23	39%
3001-5000	22	37%
5001-7000	7	11%
7001-9000	3	5%
9001-11000	2	4%
>11001	2	4%
Mother's Occupation		
Household worker	59	83.1%
Service	3	4.2%
Dead	9	12.7%

Table 2 presented that, most of the victims (69%) were from rural area while 72% found in indoor suicidal places. The study also showed most of the incident (21.1%) occurred at midnight, 19.7% at day and 12.7% at night while maximum (46.5%) used hanging, 33.8% poisoning and 9.9% giving

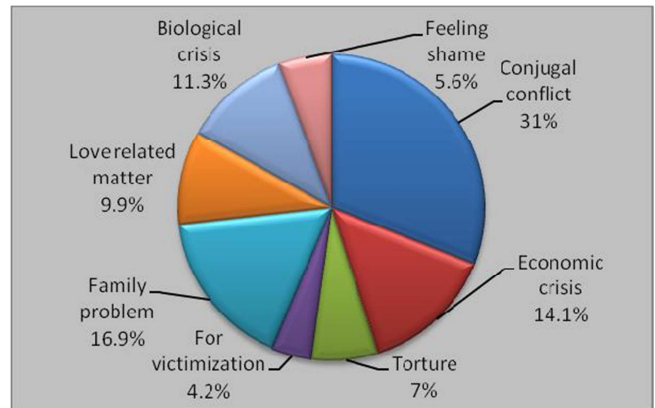
body under train.

**Table 2.** Environmental factors of suicide.

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Area		
Urban	22	31%
Rural	49	69%
Place of Suicide		
Indoor	51	72%
Outdoor	20	28%
Time of occurring suicide		
Early morning	4	5.6%
Morning	4	5.6%
Day	14	19.7%
Noon	10	14.1%
Afternoon	8	11.3%
Evening	7	9.9%
Night	9	12.7%
Midnight	15	21.1%
Means of Suicide		
Hanging	33	46.5%
Poisoning	24	33.8%
Giving body under railway	7	9.9%
Fire burn	2	2.8%
Acid burn	1	1.4%
Sleeping pill	2	2.8%
Cutting vain	1	1.4%
Electric shock	1	1.4%

Figure 1 showed that, most of the people (31%) committed suicide for conjugal conflict, 16.9% for family problem,

14.1% for economic crisis and 9.9% for love related matters.



**Figure 1.** Reasons of suicide.

From the cross tabulation in table 3, it was found that, most of the victims of 18-27 years of age (42.3%) to commit suicide due to conjugal conflict (15.5%). Because this aged group peoples do not like domination, they are aggressive too and they have high ambitions, demands etc. So, when they can't achieve their goals according to their means, they commit suicide.

**Table 3.** Relation between reason of suicide and ages of the victims.

Agegroup		Conjugal conflict	Economic crisis	Torture	Reason of committing suicide			Biological crisis	Feeling shame	Total
					For victimization	Family problem	Love related matter			
Up to 17 year	Number	1	-	1	3	3	1	2	2	13
	%	1.4%	-	1.4%	4.2%	4.2%	1.4%	2.8%	2.8%	18.3%
18-27 year	Number	11	2	4	-	5	6	1	1	30
	%	15.5%	2.8%	5.6%	-	7.0%	8.5%	1.4%	1.4%	42.3%
28-37 year	Number	7	3	-	-	3	-	1	-	14
	%	9.9%	4.2%	-	-	4.2%	-	1.4%	-	19.7%
38-47 year	Number	3	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	8
	%	4.2%	4.2%	-	-	-	-	2.8%	-	11.3%
48-57 year	Number	0	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	3
	%	.0%	2.8%	-	-	-	-	1.4%	-	4.2%
Above 58 year	Number	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	3
	%	-	-	-	-	1.4%	-	1.4%	1.4%	4.2%
Total	Number	22	10	5	3	12	7	8	4	71
	%	31.0%	14.1%	7.0%	4.2%	16.9%	9.9%	11.3%	5.6%	100%

### 4. Discussion

Suicide is increasing alarmingly day by day for various reasons around the world [24]. From the current study found that 42.3% of victims committed suicide whose were belonged the age group 18 to 27 years and 19.7% from 28 to 37 years while 54.9% were female and religion of 80.3% were Islam. It is also found most of them married (74.6%) while 74.6% from nuclear family and education of 40.8% were up to PSC and 38% were household worker while 35.2% victim's father were farmer. Another study supporting

the present study showed suicide is generally more pronounced among men, and particularly severe among women in the 15-29 year age group [25, 26]. The study showed most of the victims (69%) was from rural area while 72% found indoor. The study also showed most of the incident (21.1%) occurred at midnight, 19.7% at day and 12.7% at night while maximum (46.5%) used hanging, 33.8% poisoning and 9.9% giving body under train as means of committing suicide while another study about suicide in south Asia sowed Poisoning and hanging are the two leading means of committing suicide across the subcontinent, with context-specific variations. [27, 28]. From the study found

most of the people (31%) committed suicide for conjugal conflict, 16.9% for family problem, 14.1% for economic crisis and 9.9% for love related matter. Another study supporting the study presented that poisoning is common means of suicides and underlying reasons were age, chronic illness, maternal mental health, previous suicide attempt, poverty and social exclusion [29-31]. Ecological perspective is also useful to understand suicides. It suggests different layers influence an individual. These layers are the self, family, peers, school, community, culture, society and the environment [32, 33]. Sign and symptoms of depression are noticeable and easy to recognize depressed person likely to commit suicide but it is necessary to understand that all depressed do not commit suicides. However, depression is the most common cause of suicides and previous suicide attempt predicts high chance of committing suicide [34, 35]. Sometime interpersonal conflict, pressure to get success, problems created by existing rules and regulation, loss off a menthe society, financial problems precipitate suicides. In that circumstance a person may feel hopeless and helpless and wants an escape through suicide [36]. The present study found who were between 18-27 years of age (42.3%) and had conjugal conflict (15.5%) they committed suicide very frequently. Because this aged group peoples do not like domination, they are aggressive too and they have high ambitions, demands etc. So, when they can't achieve their goals according to their means, they commit suicide. The psychoanalytic theory says suicides are result of child environment by which a member of a society is likely to express violent expression either outer in the form of murder or inside in the form of suicide [37, 38]. A study conducted in Iran showed that family factors such as family conflicts and marital problems played a role in committing suicides [21, 39]. There are different protective factors that prevent us from suicides. The personal flexibility, tolerance, self-mastery, healthy family relationship, positive attitude and sense of humour encourage us to manage suicidal tendency [20]. Considering the overall study, it was felt that human lives should be exploitation free and safer to reduce mental illness to curb suicidal victimogenesis [40-44].

## 5. Conclusion

Suicide is a great public health and social problem for societies all over the globe. The way societies view suicide varies widely according to culture and religion. Basically social, psychological and economical factors are responsible for suicide. There is an urgent need to establish new or evaluate existing, national suicide surveillance systems in the country. Further investigation is urgently needed to ensure that public health policy and interventions are put in place. Anti-suicidal campaigns should be organized in the country

fearing the fatal tendency of gradually increasing the number of suicidal victims day by day across the world.

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