

## *Suicide During The Pandemic Time*

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**Abstract – In recent years the biggest challenge facing humanity is the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a challenge that has manifested itself in many problems in all spheres of life. One of the areas that have affected him is mental health, which has been much discussed. However, the other main issue that this study is about is suicides and the causes that brought them about.**

**Suicide is a complex act and appears due to many factors, which are sometimes known, and some cases remain unknown at the time of death. But, the purpose of this study is to study the known causes that caused suicides during the time of the pandemic.**

**Identifying specific factors associated with changing the suicide case ratio provides valuable information to the community. To raise his awareness about such cases and to sensitize them to approach them properly.**

**The result of this study is to determine how various factors around us play a major role in our mental health and our emotional state by pushing us towards committing the act of suicide. These results include a description of the characteristics of each factor and how influential they are.**

**To have a safer and more efficient treatment of these cases, this study contributes to the field of medicine, integrating also the field of psychology and sociology. Thus, through the cooperation of these areas competent for these issues, suicide prevention can be achieved.**

**Keywords – Pandemic, Suicide, Stress, Anxiety, Social Isolation, Economy, Emotional State, Situation Management, Mental Health.**

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic poses a global challenge in terms of infectious diseases and mental health. The rapid pace of the spread of the virus has led to increased insecurity, which has caused great fear and anxiety among people. Imposition of movement restrictions led to increased stress and anxiety as a result of unemployment, financial weakness, and lack of physical contact with family and friends.

This pandemic is continuing social disruption, rising diseases, and loss of life of different generations. According to statistics at the end of December 2020 over 85 million people were infected with Covid-19, and of them, over 1.8 million lost their lives. (Worldmeters, 2020). These figures bring other concerns, which are related to the impact on the mental health of the population. They come as a result of public health measures put in place to reduce the spread of the virus. However, the implementation of these new rules damaged businesses, social services, and education. It also threatened the lives of people who had previously lived in severe socio-economic conditions. All these alarming conditions can affect the deterioration of the suicide rate, which even before the pandemic was quite high in some parts of the world.

Suicide rates can be affected by many reasons and the pandemic only reinforces those reasons through new concerns presented. The main concerns regarding suicide prevention during the pandemic are related to the lack of encouragement and donation of assistance to people with suicidal thoughts and behaviors. During this time the number of people with the severe psycho-emotional condition, alcohol sales, domestic violence, and deteriorating health of people suffering from various chronic diseases

has increased. Another concern that may influence the incitement of these suicidal thoughts and behaviors is the insensitive and irresponsible media reporting on pandemic-related suicidal deaths. Also, the number of purchases of various deadly weapons and pesticides may increase.

Because non-screening of mental health poses a high risk to the population during the pandemic period, cooperation with relevant mental health institutions is essential. Where through them and non-governmental organizations to organize various awareness activities for the community, to help manage the current situation. Whereas, addressing and coping with such situations presents an essential need for humanity.

### II. PURPOSE

This study aims to get acquainted with the notion of suicide and the factors that lead to the commission of this act. Also the impact of the pandemic on causing suicides, suicidal behaviors, and thoughts. Another purpose of this study is to identify and evaluate any evidence published during the Covid-19 pandemic worldwide, to find appropriate tools, which help prevent suicide. Here is the importance of assessing the effectiveness of strategies to be used to reduce the risk of suicide deaths, such behaviors, and thoughts, which are related to the current pandemic situation.

### III. DEFINITION AND HISTORY OF SUICIDES

Suicide is an old universal phenomenon known as the act of killing oneself. It is considered as complex human behavior with biological, social, psychological, economic, and religious aspects. To explain this phenomenon, we always rely on Emile Durkheim's Theory, which deals with suicide rates between different societies and countries. According to him, suicide is defined as *"any event of death that is a direct or indirect result of a positive or negative action taken by the deceased, knowing that it will result in death"* (Andriessen, 2007). Whereas in psychodynamic theories, suicide is defined as the desire to kill oneself as a result of the individual directing his / her anger towards others towards himself/herself (Claire N Bryson, 2019).

All suicides result in deaths that begin in the mind, where through this suicide is considered a behavior. The term "suicidal behavior" means the process of behavior, which begins with thoughts of this kind and ends with fatality. The number of suicides has increased worldwide, especially over the last 20 years. These increases have been identified as another public health crisis and have prompted the need to immediately find new strategies and solutions aimed at preventing other acts. At the same time, there has been a growing interest in trying to understand the notion of suicide and the reasons behind it. To achieve the mentioned objectives, the latest theories of the sociology of emotions, cultural sociology, sociological social psychology, and theories of social networks must be carefully reviewed.

### IV. CAUSES OF SUICIDE

Suicide is considered one of the main problems facing public health, as over the years the world has seen an increase in the number of people who die each year due to suicide in the world. Recent reports show that over the last 5 decades the number of suicides has increased by 60% and that 78% of them have occurred in countries with the lowest economic status. (World Health Organization - WHO) Due to gender, age, socio-economic status, and method of suicide, the suicide rate varies between different countries and regions. According to studies, men commit more suicides than women, but suicide attempts are higher among women.

Suicides are caused by various factors such as depression, mental disorders, personality and eating disorders, socioeconomic conditions, and post-traumatic stress disorder. The use of alcoholic beverages also carries a high risk of suicidal behaviors.

There are numerous methods of suicide, but the most common are hanging, use of firearms, and chemical poisoning. Through the behaviors that people with suicidal thoughts exhibit, sometimes their commission is prevented, but sometimes the risk of committing such an act cannot be predicted.

### V. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MENTAL HEALTH

Studies have reported that some of the initial symptoms of Covid-19 are neuropsychiatric in nature. However, the focus of institutions during the pandemic has been directed at persons infected with the virus, eliminating persons suffering from various mental illnesses and other persons prone to exhibit symptoms of these diseases or suicidal behaviors as a result of the condition.

severe socio-economic. Because, these people have a harder time coping with the pandemic, which has changed the pace of their lives.

On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that patients with generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, sleep disorders, history of alcohol and substance abuse, and previous suicide attempts are among the risk groups for suicide during and after the pandemic(Yeen Huang, 2020).

Therefore, extra care should be taken with these risk groups to reduce the degree of risk, because mental health is a very sensitive area and should be given more importance.

### VI. SUICIDES DURING THE PANDEMIC

The imposition of various measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 has greatly affected the lives of everyone, as a result of the restriction of movement inside and outside the country. Also in some countries, most of the vital activities have been banned, which has led to the total isolation of the population and numerous subsequent problems. However, isolation, although it has had a positive effect in combating Covid-19, has negatively affected the aspect of suicides, because people have stayed away from their relatives and society. The quarantine procedure is related to many factors such as health, physical condition, and psychosocial, which lead to dangerous situations for suicide.

The main factors influencing suicide prevention are social relationships and social support. This has caused loneliness and the inability to express their feelings about their current state and their psycho-emotional state. This is the reason why an urgent need to observe people is necessary during this time. Because it is important to monitor people about the methods they are using to deal with quarantine and how much it is affecting their mental health, to prevent suicides.

Due to the restrictions imposed, people have been banned from numerous cultural activities, which have gathered people and accompanied them among themselves. And with the absence of these events, we will certainly have an increased risk of suicide. Because socializing and coexistence show a protective effect against suicide because living in a community is a basic human need manifested from prehistory.

In addition to the aforementioned concerns, the Covid-19 pandemic has also affected the global economy. Since its inception, economic problems have begun to emerge, such as rising unemployment, financial losses, and early retirement. The labor force was also lost, which caused production disruptions due to the new measures. The created economic crisis and job loss are considered important factors for the increase of suicides. In order not to increase the number of suicides and to better cope with the economic crisis, many governments have designed various financial support programs for their people.

Suicidal behavior can be observed in physical illnesses as well as in psychiatric disorders. Although the relationship between physical illness and suicidal behavior is not clearly known, the results of studies conducted so far support the suicidal tendency in physical illness(Jin Shenghua, 2020). In particular, the course and treatment of chronic diseases have been negatively affected by the pandemic. Therefore, special care is required for people with health disorders, especially during human disasters such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

### VII. THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR DURING COVID – 19

During the pandemic, the use of media for information purposes, spending time on various social networks, and communicating with family and friends has increased. Social isolation has made the media even more inseparable from our lives. However, this does not mean that they do not have a negative impact. On the contrary, it is reported that various reports of suicides and pandemics, which have not been based on facts and scientific research, reinforce the thoughts of these persons to commit such an act. Dissemination of false or inaccurate information about Covid-19 can cause panic and fear in society. Since it can make the fight against disease more difficult by increasing stigma(Farooq Azam Rathore, 2020).

Constant exposure to such news increases fears and suicidal behavior worldwide. It is therefore preferable for people sensitive to this news not to follow it and the media to respect the ethics of publication, to reduce the risk of suicide(Dana Rose Garfin, 2020).

So, the media have their positive role in keeping us in constant contact with each other and introducing us to innovations in the world. However, this does not mean that they cannot negatively affect us. Therefore, it is important to approach them to protect our mental health.

### VIII. SUICIDE PREVENTION

The development of suicide prevention programs should be an urgent need for all countries in the world. Where some of them in health policies have included such programs, creating agencies that help prevent suicides. Suicide is known to be one of the leading causes of death in the world, but it is preventable. Therefore, various awareness and information platforms should be created about them.

Information on ways to prevent suicide is limited due to the lack of a complete explanation of the relationship between Covid-19 and suicidal behaviors(Gil Zalsman, 2020). However, the relevant institutions on these issues need to be more engaged to achieve the desired goal, because the pandemic continues to be present in the world. So, based on our experiences, lessons, and experiences during this time of crisis, suicide prevention programs need to be developed.

Also, new anti-covid measures have stopped the development of all cultural activities and this has increased social isolation and loneliness. It is therefore forced that the development of these events is done through online platforms. Various artistic performances held in family settings and online meetings on various topics have raised people's morale and enabled human contact not to be lost.

The pandemic is a period of personal reflection and life, so it can also change our view of these two notions. In fact, this change has started to be noticed because solidarity between people has increased during this time. In this way, people began to consider life more precious and were more afraid of death. So, everyone tried to stay close to each other through the opportunities allowed by the established measures and especially through the numerous online platforms. This has served as a defense mechanism against suicide because only through empathy, support, and love can we meet this challenge.

### IX. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Humanity as a social being is going through an unstoppable pandemic situation that is causing major problems like stress, anxiety, and severe emotional state. Social isolation is also negatively affecting the economy, where the lack of situation management is posing a serious risk to the economic and health situation in the world. Where these two problems are leading to an increase in the number of suicides.

During this situation we are in it is necessary to create groups of experts from various fields such as mental health experts, psychologists, sociologists to deal with the creation of national strategies for suicide prevention. Then, to organize various training and awareness campaigns for the citizens. Where the latter is essential in preventing this act because it lacks the knowledge of citizens about this issue.

Adequate and timely support also plays an important role in preventing suicide and improving such thoughts and behaviors. Early interventions make it easier to reduce the risk and achieve the desired results because each needs to be treated uniquely and needs specific treatment time. Therefore, raising awareness would help prevent these social phenomena and overcome such challenges.

So compassion, punctuality, and emotional support play a key role in coping with the situation. Because only in such cases can we display our human nature and prove that fewer things can make a difference. In this case, we can save the lives of many people in the world only by showing care and sensitivity to them.

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