

## TRENDS OF SUICIDAL DEATHS AMONG FEMALE IN THE VISAKHAPATNAM AREA

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**ABSTRACT:** Incidence of suicidal deaths in the Visakhapatnam City and its suburbs is comparatively high. More males succumbed to suicide than females, the most common age group being 21-30 years. The usual methods for committing suicide were Agricultural Pesticides, Hanging, Flames and Drowning in that order. The minimum age of suicide in females was 10 years girl who committed suicide by burns and maximum age was 80 years Health related problems were the most common cause of suicide contributing to as many as 27% of the total cases.

**KEYWORDS:** Suicide, Hanging, Burns, Poisoning, Drowning.

**INTRODUCTION:** Suicide means intentionally killing of one's own (his/her) life, i.e. self-destruction and is a complex problem and involves multiple factors. The pattern and methods adopted for suicide and its incidence reflects the complexity of civilization of that particular area and varies with degree of civilization. Suicidal deaths in present days among women are increasing day by day due to influence of multiple factors, which includes dowry deaths, harassment, love failure, breach of marriages, educational stress, poverty, cultural changes, Alcoholism and other family feuds.<sup>1</sup>

The city of Visakhapatnam with a congregation of all regions, religions and mixed socioeconomic status can be considered a right place to evaluate the problem of suicide in Visakhapatnam City and suburbs.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:** It was a prospective study of cases of suicide by females brought for autopsy to the Department of Forensic Medicine, Andhra Medical College, Visakhapatnam during the year 2007. Detailed general information like name, age, sex, marital status, religion, occupation, along with social, medical and other personal details was gathered from each case. The data were collected and tabulated for easy study and comparison with the available previous studies.

**OBSERVATION & DISCUSSION:** Out of 1346 unnatural deaths, 287 cases were suicidal in manner whereas ..... cases were of Accidental deaths and .....homicides. (How many accidental deaths and how many homicidal.

It is observed that the number of suicidal deaths outnumbered other crimes like Homicides and sudden unexpected deaths. However, the Accidental Deaths (including Road Traffic Accidents) outnumbered the figures of suicidal deaths.

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Analysis of data revealed that as regards to sex wise pattern, males show predominance over females which is also consistent with the works of Lalwani et al<sup>1</sup>. Out of 287 suicidal deaths, males account for 170 and females 117 cases (Fig. No.1). Our study was consistent with the works of Lalwani et al<sup>1</sup> and Patel.<sup>2</sup>

The most vulnerable age group was between 21-30 years followed by 31-40 years age group. This higher incidence in younger age group may be due to their active life style, stress and increasing social and family responsibility. Similar observations were noted in earlier studies.<sup>3-4</sup> The youngest person to commit suicide was 10 years old female and oldest person was an 80 years old female. There was no case recorded at the Department below the age 10 years except one child died along with his mother due to burns and very few cases were recorded above the age of 65 years.

With regards to religion, Hindus showed more predominance than Muslims and very few cases were recorded for Christians. This we can explain that majority of the population belongs to Hindu. With regards to means and method adopted for committing suicide the following were the common means adopted in order of higher incidence.

Out of 122 cases of suicidal poisoning 90 were males (31.35%) and 32 were females (11.15%). Among the poisoning cases recorded most of the cases revealed ingestion of organophosphate compounds that is out of 122 cases reported, most of people committed suicide by organophosphate compounds and closely followed by monocrotophos and is next followed closely endosulfan, phorate, carbamate and corrosive poisons. It is consistent with the works of Gupta et al.<sup>5</sup> Sizable number of cases was reported in which nature of poison could not be determined (Fig. No. 2).

Hanging is the next means of committing suicide; out of 97 cases males account for 47 cases (16.38%) and females account for 50 cases (17.42%). The present study is consistent with the works of Meera et al<sup>6</sup> and Mohammed et al.<sup>7</sup>

Suicide by flame burns is the third largest means; out of 39 cases, 15 males accounting to 5.23% and 24 females accounting to 8.36%. Our study is consistent with the works of Mazumder and Patowary so far as the female dominance is concerned.<sup>8</sup>

Drowning constituted the fourth group; out of 12 cases of suicidal drowning 4 cases were male (1.39%) and 8 cases were females (2.78%). Drowning as a common method of suicide was also mentioned by Chaurasia et al.<sup>9</sup> Suicide by train was seen in 17 cases out of which 14 were males (4.87%) and 3 cases were females (1.04%).

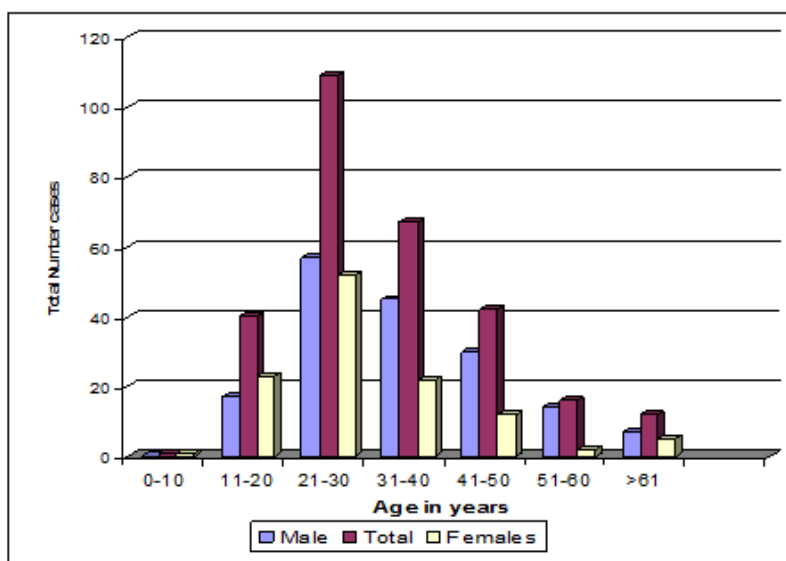
As regards the percentage of share by various causes of suicide, out of 287 cases, 25% is due to Family Problems, 27% due to Health Problems, 11% due to Psychiatric Problems, 6% due to Dowry Problems, 1% due to Unemployment Problems, 2% due to Stress of Studies, 13% due to Social Problems, 15% due to other Causes (Fig. No.3). So far as the motive is concerned the present study is more or less consistent with the works of Rajiv and Chittaranjan.<sup>10</sup>

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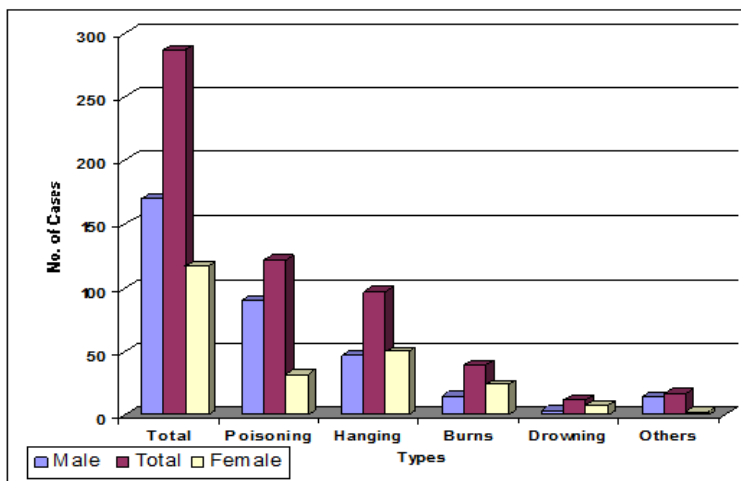
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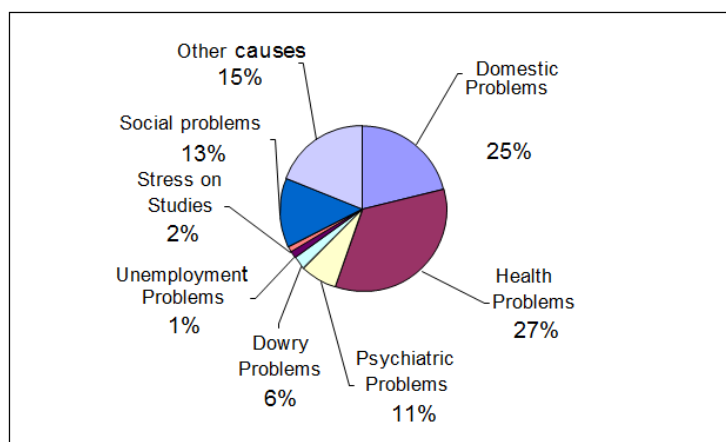


**Fig. No. 1: Sex & Age Wise Distribution of Cases**

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**Fig. No. 2: Cases Distribution According to Methods of Suicide**



**Fig. No. 3: Cases Distribution According To Motives**

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