

CONFLICTS WITHIN THE FAMILY AS CORRELATE OF SUICIDAL IDEATION AMONG STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BENIN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

*The research investigated conflicts within the family as correlate of suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis. In order to guide the study, two research questions raised were answered. Two hypotheses generated at 0.05 alpha level. Research design method adopted was a correlational survey. Population consisted of three thousand eight hundred and fifty-three students in male only and female only Public Senior Secondary schools in Benin Metropolis. Sample drawn from the population comprised, three hundred and eighty-five students in SS2 classes; being a total of six schools, two per Local Government Area. Conflicts within the family as correlate of suicidal ideation scales (CFCSIS) was the instrument used. The reliability coefficient index of 0.86 for conflict scale and 0.81 for suicidal ideation confirmed the reliability of the instrument. Pearson *r* and multiple linear regression statistics, were used to analyse collected data. Findings showed that conflicts within the family correlates with suicidal ideation among Public Senior Secondary students in the Metropolis of Benin. Recommendations are, that massive public awareness and value re-orientation through workshops and seminars, on the dangers of harbouring suicidal thoughts is made; including, the creation of functioning counselling centres and mental health clinics with well-trained counselling psychologists to help change attitudes towards negative happenings.*

Keywords: Conflict, family, suicidal ideation, secondary school students

Introduction

Suicidal ideations are thoughts of suicidal actions, imaginations, vivid awareness, deep conceptualisation, to harm or kill one's self. They are preoccupation with self-harm, suicide or death. This has been an abysmal situation globally among countries including Nigeria. This trend has become a menace in our society in recent years, especially among the youths in the older schools in Benin Metropolis. Suicide, on the other hand, is the act of deliberately harming oneself, or even causing detrimental pain to one's body, in such a way that it would result to death, this action does not emerge from nothingness, but results from thoughts (Ideation) connected to suicide. Ideation is a situation in which an individual depicts a mental image, a conceptualisation, or an imagination, regarding self-harm.

Suicidal Ideation (SI) can be elucidated from two perspectives. It can be seen as either passive or active. It is active when such a person thinks about suicide with the intention of committing the action and proceeds to implement it. Thus, active SI could be explained as experiencing current, specific, suicidal thoughts. It could further be seen as vivid awareness to cause self-harm with no desire to live. While it is passive when an individual has specific suicidal thoughts, about "not desiring to exist," or "not desiring to rise with the sun," however, he or she, do not propose to carry out such intention. These are when individuals have thoughts about suicidal action without actually committing the act or thoughts of wanting to take their own lives. They are imaginations, or conceptualizations, to harm or kill one's self. They are described as preoccupation with self-harm, suicide or death. Nevertheless, not everybody having these thoughts carry out actions on them, which makes it difficult to foretell those likely to carry the action on such imaginations.

Suicidal ideation is one of the mental health problems perceived as part of the challenges militating against the expected healthy psychological development of students in achievement of educational goals in the secondary institutions. Although other mental health issues include depression, and disorders like: anxiety, eating, personality, and post-traumatic stress, suicidal ideation has been spotted as the most worrisome to families, schools, the government, and the society at large, particularly among adolescents in the Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nigeria. It has been identified as associated with suicidal actions as well as suicidal behaviours.

In an attempt to get information on the genesis surrounding negative and self-defeating thoughts that leads to suicidal ideation, traces were made to things such as situations or circumstances confronting individuals at present, as well as their current state of mental wellbeing. For example, some persons are known to inculcate thoughts of not being loved by those around them, which then causes them to fall into depression, feel rejected, or even believe that they are worthless. In addition, others may feel that they are a burden to their families, friends, or even neighbours, which then breeds the feeling of unwantedness as well as dejection that subsequently throws them into a burdensome mood and worthlessness state (Joiner, 2005).

As further searches emanated on what could be the causes of such thoughts arising in the minds of these individuals in the first place, suggestions that emerged were: when people encounter

problems that they think they cannot handle anymore, they tend to give up on themselves; so also,

when they believe within themselves that they are not measuring up to expectations, as well as not being on the same level with their mates or those within the same age bracket with them, they tend to fall into a depressive mood. Instances are, when a person fails an examination, fails to get a casual job to support his financial needs that his parents cannot meet, or continues to have low grades in their academic pursuit, or even becomes unable to meet a set goal at his place of work. In addition, when degrading and negative utterances are made by their families, friends, or even neighbours, such as: "you are not going anywhere," "you are never going to amount to anything," "you are a total disappointment," and so on, these dampens their spirit as well as bring down their morale. Thus, as these thoughts are brooded upon by these individuals without immediate intervention to negate them, the resultant effect usually glides down to suicidal ideation and may eventually end up as a full blow suicidal action.

The World Health Organization (WHO) (2021) statistics reflected its yearly report of how 703,000 individuals end their lives with numerous persons who try to kill themselves. Each self-caused death is tragic and causes distress to communities, countries, and families that have lifelong effects on those left behind. It further reports that, throughout the lifespan, suicide occurs. In 2019, this stood out as the world's fourth-leading killer of people aged 15–29. The world's wealthiest nations are not the only ones experiencing this problem, but in all regions of the world. In fact, over 77% of it occurred in low- and middle-income countries in the same year. Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of WHO, noted that approximately 800,000 persons indulge in suicidal actions yearly and with every death there are a lot of imperfect attempts.

Akinremi (2019) in Featured News Data stories reported that in 2016, more than 17,000 people died by suicide in Nigeria, making it the country with the highest suicide rate in Africa, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Ethiopia came in second with 7,323 deaths, and South Africa came in third with 6,476. In addition, it approximated the global number of suicidal cases to a person taking their lives per 40 seconds. It also reported that the three easiest methods used to commit suicide were self-poisoning with pesticides, shooting, and hanging. In addition, worldwide global report showed high data from other nations such as India (with 215,000 cases) being at the top amongst six countries, of China (with 136,267 cases), America, the Russian Federation, Japan, and Nigeria.

Although there are few studies on suicide ideation, there are numerous reports in Nigerian newspapers. For example, the Guardian Television Health reported some cases as recorded by Muanya, et al. (2019), of a student of the Department of English and Literary Studies at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, (UNN) who committed suicide in the solitude of an uncompleted building located at Sullivan Road, Nsukka where he allegedly slipped into coma and died after taking two bottles of an insecticide: sniper. A friend of his stated that he displayed a note on suicide about how his girlfriend jilted him shortly before committing the act. Another is that of a 19-year-old girl in one of the Public Senior Secondary Schools in Lagos, Nigeria, who purportedly took sniper at the house where her boyfriend reside, after pondering over being jilted by him.

There exist numerous factors mitigating against the mental wellbeing of the youths in the society, which contributes to suicidal problems faced. One of such factors is conflicts within the family. There are different kinds of conflict such as; task, relationship, and value conflicts, among others, however, since this study is focused on conflicts within the family, relationship (family) conflict would first be considered in this discuss. Parents are the major stakeholders in the family, as such, their relationship is seen as one that shapes the structure and general atmosphere in the family. Common among many families is parental conflicts which frequently leads to friction involving the whole family. Poor family communication is considered as one of the major sources of family conflict. This situation arises when there is absence of appropriate communication. Today's society experiences superficial communication, thus not having time to share expressive dialogs among family members. With increasing generational gap between parents and children, values are changing and parent-child power struggles erode the peaceful relationship that should exist within the family and this can generate stress and conflicts among the whole household.

Conflicts within the family is one of the issues that may generate suicidal thoughts. These conflicts comprises of struggles, clashes of interest, as well as intense arguments, which results in physical or emotion abuses, causing changes in attitudes, misunderstandings, and differences in opinions, that eventually affect harmonious relationships and even loss of existing peace and life. Studies have shown that students in Public Senior Secondary schools in Nigeria faced with suicidal ideations have links with conflicts arising within their families as in the case reported by Muanya, et al. (2019) in the Igando region of Lagos State, where a 17-year-old girl tragically passed away after consuming sniper. According to the report, she took the deadly drug that ultimately did her in since her granny had urged her to leave the home when she found out she was pregnant. Grych et al. (2010) defines interparental conflict as disagreement between parents or other significant adults in a child's life that causes stress and the child or teen to seek meaning and relief from the conflict via family dynamics.

Interparental conflict is a situation of intense atmosphere in a home whereby there is constant argument and disagreement between parents. It is a condition of unhealthy relationship between parents. This type of environment increases tension and stress among the children. In fact, the children are the most affected in a situation where parents are constantly engaged in conflicts and disagreements. These could lead to difficulties in having smooth and positive fellowship between parents and children. Conflicts show negative effects for a long period, usually from childhood into adolescence. It also has a lasting negative effect on well-being, such as, raising the possibility of future experience of clashes in parent's relationships. In addition, children tend to replicate these negative behaviours observed from their parents consciously or unconsciously which tend to affect their relationships in future with their own children. This can also result to

parents not being able to effectively support and manage their children's affairs which increases the chances of parent and child conflicts. As a result, fights between parents have adverse effects on qualities of continuing relationships between them and the children at home, which may also have long lasting effect on children and adolescent self- efficacy, belief and overall psychological well-being.

Statement of the Problem

In recent times, incidences of suicide attempts and suicide have being on the increase among the youths in Benin Metropolis and particularly within Public Senior Secondary Schools. Little information is available to know the extent of seriousness of this problem, but the little available information, is of great concern to the public. This has generated discourse among the academicians and mental health practitioners on the need to provide interventions to the public in the area of mental health (Aloba & Ojeleye, 2017). Conflict is unavoidable in family set up. Adolescents facing frequent family conflict are usually exposed to distress, prone to mental health problems, and subsequently subjected to serious mental disorder that can lead to harbouring suicidal thoughts. Nevertheless, finding amicable solutions through research studies can help families overcome their challenges for the well-being of the members of the family. Studies by Coletiva and Coletiva (2015) showed how thoughts of suicide was a resultant effect of conflict. However, there are no studies on conflict within the family as it correlates with suicidal ideation among Senior Secondary students within the Public Schools in Benin Metropolis. Therefore, could it be said that family conflicts are correlates with suicidal ideation? The desire to answer the question has motivated this study.

Literature Review

Interpersonal Theory of Suicide (IPTS) by Joiner (2005)

Here, Joiner's (2005) Interpersonal Theory of Suicide (IPTS) serves as the theoretical foundation, which goes to expound why persons engross themselves in suicidal behaviour and, pinpoint others at risk. The component of the IPTS comprises of suicidal attempts and thoughts. The desire to commit suicide resides within the dual presence of Perceived Burdensomeness (PB) and Thwarted Belongingness (TB) in emotionally challenged individuals. The theory further indicates that although the wish to commit suicide is required, this unaided will not bring about death by suicide. An individual will have to devise capability in order to surmount his or her normal fear to die to actually carry out suicidal act. This, Joiner termed as "acquired" capability since this is not an innate capability of humans. Somewhat, the capacity to involve oneself in behaviour connected to suicide is only learnt through experiences in life. Being afraid of death is a powerful and natural instinct. Someone no longer becomes afraid of death when he or she is likely to develop a lack of pain tolerance and an increased fear of pain as a result of exposure to painful physical stimuli or traumatic life events. Some examples of such events include painful experiences in childhood, being a witness to a terrible incident, having a serious disease, or hurting oneself (Joiner, 2005). Due to desensitisation to painful stimuli, the capacity to participate in suicidal conduct

those who are at high risk of suicide attempts or deaths caused by it, such as those who work in physically demanding occupations (such as firefighters, surgeons, and soldiers). In particular, veterans of war have probably seen horrific injuries and deaths firsthand, and they have developed a natural aversion to anything that may cause them physical or mental harm (Joiner, 2009). There has been an uptick in military suicides, so this makes sense. Furthermore, the most important factor in determining the likelihood of future suicide attempts is the presence of prior attempts (Borowosky, et al., 2001). This is consistent with Joiner's idea; those who attempt suicide will develop a conditioned dread of dying, which will increase the likelihood that they will attempt suicide again.

The theory emphasised that TB and PB increase tendencies of SI or suicide

Thwarted belongingness (Social Alienation or isolation): which means little sense of fitting in. Which mean, a knowledge that an individual is estranged from others, not an essential part of kinfolk, sphere of friends, or valued assembly. Just like investigation on PB, enough evidence on its association with behaviour connected to suicide, exists. Indeed, there is solid evidence that indices associated with social isolation have emerged as the most robust and consistent risk variables for suicidal conduct, when considering all relevant levels of analysis (Boardman, et al., 1999). The link between the absence or presence of suicidality and belonging has been well-known for various populations, together with students in college, young adolescents, psychiatric inpatients, and elderly individuals. Additionally, suicide rates go down at festive period (when societies come in unity at festivities; Joiner, et al., 2006) as also during tragic or hardship times (when persons connects to sympathize).

Perceived burdensomeness remains the opinion an individual has about how his/her being alive is a burden to the society, friends, and families. Meaning that, "to my loved ones and the world at large, my demise will hold greater value than my life". Note that this signifies a possibly deadly misperception. Previous researches showed documented relationships between suicidal ideation and greater degrees of perceived difficulty. According to Villa (2022), Joiner (2009) found that PB towards family was associated with suicidal thoughts in both community members and those at high risk of suicide. Additionally, Van Orden et al. (2006) revealed that a measure of perceived burdensomeness was a strong predictor of both past and present suicidal thoughts and attempts. However, this relationship was still not fully explained by other factors. This theory is appropriate for this study because it provides knowledge about the atmosphere that could drive a person to want indulge in suicidal actions or have suicidal ideation. When Senior Secondary School Students have these feelings of PB and TB, they have a tendency to find succor in suicidal ideas that may eventually end up as suicidal actions or attempts.

Risk Factors and Suicidal Ideation

The following factors, according to a systematic review of the literature, have a strong correlation with teenage suicidal phenomena: depression, alcohol abuse, hard street drug use, suicidal behaviour among friends, living away from parents, family conflict, unsupportive parents, and a history of abuse (Evans et al., 2004; Fuller-Thomson et al., 2013).

Other risk factors include, abuse, family psychopathology, suicidality, intrafamilial relationships, and loss of a parent through death or divorce. Parenting style (which refers to a parent's approach to raising their child and has a significant impact on their character development, competence, and problem-solving abilities; Baumrind, 2005; Zhai et al., 2015; Ajibola & Agunbiade, 2021). Still, more risk factors are adverse childhood experiences, aggressive tendencies, family history of suicide, depression, acute financial crises, mental illness, rejection and loneliness, substance use, physical or chronic illness, and insults in public places. In addition, being the primary causes of teenage suicide and suicide attempts in Edo State are unrequited love, parental conflict, incurable diseases, sexual violence, anxiety, and stress, along with low academic achievement (Nnafor, et al., 2013; Okoedion & Okolie, 2019). Stress-related problems like poor interpersonal connections, bad life events, and financial hardships frequently contribute to an increase in the risk of suicide. Furthermore, there is evidence that certain physical illnesses like neurological disorders, cancer, and other chronic illnesses, as well as cultural, familial, and social circumstances, as well as genetics, can all contribute to the facilitation of suicide. Mental disorders like depression, stress, personality disorders, alcohol dependence, or schizophrenia (Hawton, et al., 2012; Nwankwo, 2016).

Associated risk factors according to Pan African Health Organisation (PAHO) & World Health Organisation (WHO) (2016) are Community-related risks including disasters and wars, discrimination, the stress of acculturation (e.g., among indigenous populations or displaced persons), a sense of isolation, relationship conflict, abuse and violence. In addition, individual risk factors include suicide history in families, earlier suicide attempts, mental disorder, financial loss, harmful use of alcohol, and severe chronic pain. More effects also are at work, namely, stigmatization of individuals seeking help pertaining to suicidal behaviour (suicidal ideation or planning) or people with substance use or mental disorders. Suicidal thoughts and actions are most often precipitated by parental disputes, emotional breakdowns, and academic issues (Pereira, 2011; quoted in Gouveia-Pereira et al., 2014). Research by Martins and Gouveia-Pereira (2012) in Gouveia-Pereira et al. (2014) found that adolescents who had suicidal thoughts were less independent in their relationships with their parents on the conflictual dimension. Evidence from both the Abaid et al. (2010) and Gouveia-Pereira et al. (2014) research supports this idea.

Family Influence

This is an intervening variable in this study. Looking at the family from which adolescents emerge from, Gouveia-Pereira, et al. (2014), stated that, family At each point in its life cycle, it must complete a predetermined set of duties related to its development. Since families include varied characters in diverse settings, every household has a distinctive environment. According to Amalu (2017), a child's familial environment at birth determines the extent to which they can adjust

to life's challenges and establishes the foundation for their capacity to perform in various contexts. The teenage years are exciting and demanding. Due to the frequent physical, social, personal, and emotional changes that these teenagers experience, there are also times when they experience intense anxiety and bewilderment. This creates pressure to perform well academically or fit in socially (Ihemedu, 2018). The period of time between adolescence and young adulthood is crucial and is marked by a number of life transitions, such as moving away from home and family, beginning a new family, attending college or university, and so forth. (Ajibola & Agunbiade, 2021).

Gouveia-Pereira, et al. (2014), further revealed that families frequently experience some tension through changing moments seen as transitional and normative periods. Such fluctuations could be caused when a change occurred outside the family (intersystem) or when changes occurred within the family (intrasystem), which forces such members to modify and adapt family interactions. There are robust and significant associations between family functioning and individual conduct, according to further research. and that, dysfunctional individuals generally grow up in dysfunctional families (Van As & Janssens, 2002). As a result, as these teenagers enter into partnerships and spend more years in school, they also grow more daring, more susceptible to social pressure, and more likely to consume drugs and partake in dangerous sexual behaviours (Mars, et al., 2014; Ajibola & Agunbiade, 2021). Additionally, they prefer an independent existence to being under the constant supervision of their parents, even in the face of social pressure (Mars, et al., 2014; Ajibola & Agunbiade, 2021). They go through developmental stage-related frustrations and pressures that can leave them feeling hopeless and depressed. If these emotions are suppressed or bottled up, they can withdraw, internalise their issues, and believe that suicide is the only option left. (Ihemedu, 2018)

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate how conflicts within the family correlate at the Benin Metropolis Public Senior Secondary Schools with thoughts of suicide.

The two main goals of this research were to:

- (1) Determine the extent to which family disputes are associated with students' thoughts of suicide
- (2) Determine the nature of the relationship between students' thoughts of suicide and the combined impact of family influence and family conflicts.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between conflicts within the family and suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis?
2. What is the combined effect of family influence and conflicts within the family on suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between conflicts within the family and suicide ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis.
2. There is no significant relationship between the combined effect of family influence and conflicts within the family on suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis.

Methodology

This study adopted a correlational survey research design. The design was most appropriate because it showed the degree to which the independent variable (conflicts) correlate with the dependent variable (suicidal ideation). For example, the study sought to explain how family influence and conflicts correlated with suicidal ideation. The population of this study consisted of nine hundred and twenty (920) males and two thousand, nine hundred and thirty-three (2,933) females, summing up to three thousand, eight hundred and fifty-three (3,853) Senior Secondary 2 (SS2) School students in male only and female only schools of some Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis. The SS2 students were the focus because their age range is associated with reported incidences of suicidal behaviours in Nigeria. The sample for this study comprised three hundred and eighty-five (385) students in SS2 class drawn from six (6) male only and female only schools, two (male only and female only) from each of the three Local Government Area in Benin Metropolis, from the Public Senior Secondary Schools. The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to draw three hundred and eighty-five (385) sample across three stages. Instrument used in collecting data was a questionnaire titled: “Conflicts within the Family as Correlate of Suicidal Ideation Scales (CFCSIS)”.

Three test experts in the fields of Guidance and Counselling, and Measurement and Evaluation, did the content and face validity of the instrument, all from the Faculty of Education, University of Benin. This was done to ensure that the questionnaire is valid, contains the right language, as well as cover the intended area of research. These included correcting the spellings, grammatical structures, as well as looking into the capability of each item to measure what it is intended to measure. The CFCSIS instrument was administered to 20 respondents (Senior Secondary Students) that were not part of the study sample but were part of the population. This produced a reliability co-efficient value of 0.86 for conflict scale and 0.81 for suicidal ideation, which shows that the instrument was reliable. Multiple linear regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r) statistics, were used to analyse the collected data.

Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between conflicts within the family and suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis?

Hypothesis One; There is no significant relationship between conflicts within the family and suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis.

Table 1: Pearson r showing relationship between conflicts within the family and suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	R	p-value	Decision
Conflicts within the family	385	2.32	0.48	.22	0.00	significant.
Suicidal Ideation		1.26	0.41			

P-Value Significance at 0.05 level (2-tailed) (Reject Hypothesis) SD: Standard deviation

The result is that public senior secondary school students in Benin Metropolis who reported having suicide thoughts were also more likely to have had family problems, as seen in Table 1.. The table depicts a mean of 2.32 and 1.26, as well as standard deviation of 0.48 and 0.41 for conflicts within the family and suicidal ideation respectively. The correlation coefficient between conflicts within the family and suicidal ideation is 0.22, which is positive and low. However, testing at an alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected since the p-value of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Hence, in line with the hypothesis, a significant relationship exist between conflicts within family and thoughts of self-harm among secondary school pupils in the Benin Metropolis public schools.

Research Question Two: What is the combined effect of family influence and conflicts within the family on suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between the combined effect of family influence and conflicts within the family on suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis.

Table 2: Summary of ANOVA on the multiple regression estimate between combined effect of family influence and conflicts within the family on suicidal ideation among Students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Regression	4.514	2	2.257	14.665	.000
Residual	58.793	382	.154		
Total	63.307	384			

The result in Table 2 depicts the ANOVA summary of multiple regression based on suicidal ideas as predicted through the combined result of family influence with conflicts within the family, is statistically significant ($F(2, 382) = 14.665, p = .000 < .05$). Thus, we reject the null hypothesis. Students in Benin Metropolis's public senior secondary schools are more likely to express suicide

thoughts when these factors, along with family strife, are included. According to the hypothesis, students at public senior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis are more likely to have suicidal thoughts when they experience family disputes and the combined impact of family influence.

Table 3: Multiple regression coefficients of combined effect of family influence and conflicts within the family on suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	1.337	.192		6.968	.000
Family influence	-.162	.052	-.154	-3.115	.002
Conflicts within the family	.187	.042	.220	4.454	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Suicidal Ideation
Note. R = .267; R-square = .071; Adjusted R-square = .066; p < .05

The data in Table 3 shows that both family influence and conflicts within the family significantly predicts suicidal thoughts among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis. That is, family influence within the family ($p = .002$) and conflicts within the family ($p = .000$). However, conflicts within the family predicted suicidal ideation more. The adjusted R square value is .066, which indicates that 6.6% of the variance in suicidal ideation is explained by combined effect of family influence and conflicts within the family. From the overall model analysis, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the results reveal that conflicts within the family have more predictive effect on suicidal ideation midst Senior Secondary Schools students in Benin Metropolis.

Discussion

According to the first hypothesis's findings, there is a substantial correlation between family conflicts and suicide thoughts among students attending public senior secondary schools in the Benin Metropolis. This result is consistent with that of Coletiva and Coletiva (2015), who found that family conflicts—such as drug abuse by some family members, challenges between generations in cohabitation and mutual understanding, arguments between brothers, daughters-in-law, and sons-in-law, as well as communication breakdowns regarding day-to-day activities, discord, a lack of support from family members, and the absence of signs of affection among family members—cause suicidal thoughts. Goldstein et al. (2014) conducted additional research that supports the findings by demonstrating a link between family conflict and suicide thinking and behaviour in young people with depression. Still, further collaborators with the finding are Coletiva and Coletiva (2015), and Goldstein, et al. (2014), that highlighted suicidal ideation as one of the negative effects of conflicts. This was in line with Hussein and Al-Mamary (2019) which showed other harmful effects of conflicts within individuals to includes Psychosomatic reactions such as, lack of interest to work, absentmindedness to other things; job dissatisfactions; estrangements or

alienations from others, work distresses. Also including behavioural responses, meaning that conflict may compel a person to behave in unusual matter such as, decrease communication with others, excessive smoking, being hostile towards others, drinking alcohol and resist guidance attempts.

Hypothesis two results disclosed that there is significant relationship between combined effect of family influence and conflicts within the family on suicidal ideation among students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis. This finding is in line with that of Koshollek, et al. (2020), that revealed that Family members of young people who have attempted suicide exhibit less cohesiveness, more communication problems, and maladaptive control, and higher levels of conflicts. In addition, the structure of the family and relationships is an important aspect of understanding thoughts related to suicide and behaviour in adolescence, where family conflicts and family influence exist. This finding is further supported by Ihemedu (2018), who stated that, understanding the extent parenting styles (via strategic handling of conflicts) correlate with adolescent suicidal behaviour and self-disclosure is crucial for a comprehensive strategy for prevention and intervention of suicidal ideation.

Conclusion

The study concludes that, there is a significant relationship between conflicts within family and suicidal ideation among High school seniors in the Benin City Public School system, and that family dynamics, including arguments and pressures, are strong predictors of suicide thoughts among these kids. However, conflicts within the family predicted suicidal ideation more.

Recommendations

1. Massive public awareness and value re-orientation through workshops and seminars, on the dangers of harbouring suicidal thoughts, engaging in drug abuse as a way of escaping realities, and the possession of lethal items should be undertaken. Bulletins, posters, and narrative pictures relating to suicidal ideation should be posted on notice boards or billboards. These would enlighten both the students and the public, on the readily available assistance to curb such emotional disturbances.
2. Mental-health clinics should be established in all secondary schools to handle cases beyond the talk therapy. Parents should be encouraged to participate in family therapies with their wards which would change their attitudes towards negative happenings. Here they would be educated on how to handle peculiar challenges within the family, in a bid to reduce family conflicts and increase cohesion within the family. These would eventually turnout to help both adolescents and their parents understand better ways to handle conflicts, detect warning signs, and eventually have a positive effect on their psychological adjustment.

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