RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY OF SELF-CONCEPTANDSUICIDAL IDEATION AMONG MALE AND FEMALE ENGINEERING COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The suicidal behaviour of an individual begins with emotional turmoil, and ideation. During adolescence, and pre-adulthood there is a tendency of emotional instability rather confusion. This tendency would depend on many factors of personality. Another element playing an important role during this phase is Self-Concept (Self-Esteem). Low self-esteem could lead to isolation, negative thoughts, and depression. Conversely, high self-esteem is associated with high tone life, a greater control over emotions, less anxiety and greater capacity to cope with internal and external stress. The students undertaking technical education (Engineering) are at high risk, with increased stress about future. The Research was aimed at studying the Self-Concept and Suicidal Ideation among the Engineering College Students, in the region of Nagpur, India. Sample was selected purposively with, 750 Engineering College students (450 Male and 300 Female) from Engineering College students of 10 Colleges of Nagpur Region. the hypotheses were tested using the 't' test for knowing whether there was any difference in the mean scores of Male and Female students for Self-Concept and Suicidal Ideation separately. The Self-Concept of students was measured using Self-Concept Questionnaire (SCQ) standardized by Sara swat Raj Kumar (1984), and Suicidal Ideation was measured using Suicide Probability Scale (SPS) prepared by John G. Cull and Wayne S. Gill (1989). The outcome of the study revealed that:1. The Self-Concept of Male Engineering College Students is significantly higher as compared to the Female Students (t>0.01). 2. The Suicidal Ideation of female Engineering College students is significantly higher as compared to Male students (t>0.01).

INTRODUCTION

The term Self-Concept in general terms used to understand how someone thinks about, evaluates or perceives himself or herself. To be aware of oneself is to have a concept of oneself. Baumeister (1999) defined Self-Concept as, "The individual's belief about himself or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is". The Self-Concept is an important term for both social and humanistic psychology. Lewis (1990) suggests that development of a concept of self has two aspects, The Existential Self and the Categorical Self. Carl Rogers (1959) believed that Self-Concept of individual has three different components, the view you have of yourself (self-image), how much value you place on yourself (self-esteem or self-worth), and what you wish you were really like (ideal-self). Commonly, there is a misconception about Self-Concept and self-esteem. However, Carl Rogers (1961) have identified both of them separately. Self –Concept is the sum total of what I think about myself, including both physical and Mental data.

Whereas, Self-Esteem is how much I value myself. It includes one's Self-Esteem, sense of personal worthiness, and one's sense of who or what one would like to be (The Ideal Self).We form these perceptions through our experiences with and interpretations of our environment. They are influenced specially by reinforcements, evaluations of significant others, and one's attributions for one's own behaviour (Shaveson, Hubner and Stanton, 1976). William James (1890) forwarded the thought that Self-Concept develops from social comparisons. He argued that we compare ourselves to others, and use his information to develop an idea of what we are like.

It is not easy to know the person we see in the mirror, because Self-Concept is much more than what we see externally. Many of the failures and successes of individuals of different cast, creed, and race, can be attributed to the formation of their Self-Concept. In-fact many researchers have identified a direct relationship of development of normal and abnormal personality with Self-Concept.

Commonly, the word self-esteem is replaced for Self-Concept. Hence, a personal with high self-esteem is socially bold, aggressive and confident. Whereas the persons with low self-esteem may have negative traits, anti-social behaviour. Researchers have proposed that self-esteem may be associated with positive and negative traits. Depression is one of the major negative outcomes of low self –esteem (Sowislo. J and Ulrich Orth 2013). According to AICTE's (All India Council for Technical Education) report, India produced 4.6 Lakh engineers in 2004-05. In 2005-06 the number increased to 5.2 Lakh. In the last five years, the number of engineers has increased threefold. Maximum engineering colleges are in Maharashtra. In 2009, the total intake for Engineering was 17, 00,325 and in 2012-13 it was 34,49,355.

In four years' time the number of engineering colleges have grown to 12,000 and 10,400 diploma engineering colleges, with a total capacity of 50 Lakh seats. This is indicative of the tremendous competition the young Engineering students are and will be facing in future. Unlimited pressure on the young shoulders from parents, society, and self develops in this age of dependency and adjustment to life style. Not necessarily, everyone is able to sustain this pressure. Development of personality either strong or weak happens in this age and stage. We ca attribute many reasons for the same. Some of them are responsibility, family setup, self- concept, parenting styles, emotional intelligence. Hurlock E.B. (2006) mentions about personality changes happening in this age. Stating that suicide or attempts of suicide are becoming increasingly common among today's youths. Studies of adolescent suicide have disclosed that the median age is 16 years. Many boys and girls who commit or attempt to commit suicide have been socially isolated, from the group with lack of communication.

Empirical review of related studies: Review of literature in India and Abroad reveals certain factors mainly responsible for suicidal tendency. Many studies were found relating to Suicidal Ideation, with different aspects of life, may it be factors related to nature and nurture both. To understand what researches say, following studies were noted:

Sumit Kumar Singh (2012) mentions, "a high expectation to secure seats in prestigious institutes is a main reason for suicides". Despite the existence of umpteen numbers of help lines and widespread counselling, students in the Capital continue to take the extreme step due to exam related stress. Going by the statistics, at least 40 students kill themselves every year due to stress over examinations. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 23 boys and 19 girls committed suicide in 2010 in Delhi after being unable to cope with exam pressure.

While 25 boys and 23 girls committed suicide in 2009, 36 boys and 25 girls ended their lives in 2008. The numbers remained almost same in 2007 as 24 boys and 19 girls committed suicide. Psychologists say a high expectation to secure a seat in a prestigious institute is the main reason for driving a student to the edge. They also blame the increasing communication gap between children and parents, which adds more pressure to the former. "We don't have a single answer to the question of students' suicide. The reasons are pressure, competition, societal expectations and anxiety, possibly a lot of emotional disturbance, which is high among the young," says Dr Bhatia Rani, head of psychiatry department at St Stephen's Hospital.

Bhatia says one must try to understand suicide in "different dimensions". (2013). It is mention by Astin and Astin (1992) that, engineering disciplines lose approximately 53% of undergraduate students before completion of an engineering degree. Of these students, 40% switch into a non-engineering discipline and approximately 25% Leave College before their sophomore year itself. Those factors include relations with parents, conflict with parents, family happiness, parents' performance, control of parents, and concern for parents. For example, Fong (1993) examined the causes of Suicidal Ideation or suicide attempts among students. Three hundred and sixteen students in Hong Kong were participants. Of these, 3.8% had attempted suicide before and 41.8% had reported suicide ideation. The study found that lack of parental care and understanding, a non-harmonious family, and conflicts with parents were all related to Suicidal Ideation in Hong Kong adolescents.

In the study to understand Suicidal Behavior among Young People in Mumbai, it is observed that, number of suicides in India during the decade (1999–2009) has recorded an increase of 15.0% (from 1,10,587 in 1999 to 1,27,151 in 2009). The overall male: female ratio of suicide victims for the year 2009 was 64:36, the same as in the year 2008. The proportion of Boys: Girls suicide victims (up to 14 years of age) was 51:49 i.e. almost equal number of young girls have committed suicide as their male counterparts. It is observed that social and economic causes have led most of the males to commit suicide whereas emotional and personal causes have mainly driven females to end their lives. Youths (15-29 years) and lower middle-aged people (30-44 years) were the prime groups taking recourse to the path of suicides. Around 34.5% suicide victims were youths in the age group of 15-29 years and 34.2% were middle aged persons in the age group 30-44 years. 77.0% of Students who had committed suicides during 2009 were in the age-group 15-29 years. The report also indicates that the rates of suicides in mega cities in India have been steadily increasing. The suicide rate in cities (12.5) was higher as compared to All-India suicide rate (10.9). Overholser (1995) conducted a study to examine the relationship between self-esteem deficits and suicidal tendencies in 254 adolescent psychiatric inpatients and 288 high school students. He quoted that; Self-esteem can play an important role in suicidal tendencies among adolescents, the male students were found to be more with suicidal tendencies. Another study conducted by de Man (2002) on 131 undergraduate university students (aged 18-24 yrs) which revels of the relationship between Suicidal Ideation and in-stability of self-esteem, while controlling for the possible effect of depression. Results show that Suicidal Ideation was significantly related to level of self-esteem.

According to survey conducted by National Centre for Injury, Prevention and Control, in 2009, suicide was the third leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24 in India. Research and epidemiological studies indicate that suicidal behaviors appear particularly problematic among college students and young adults. Suicide ideation may serve as an indicator of suicidal behavior. Wetzel (1975). Moreover, the intensity, pervasiveness, and current suicide intention predict suicidal risk, and such suicide ideation reflects the degree to which the individual is susceptible to suicidal behavior, Beck A., Kovacs, and Weissman, (1979). They had mentioned many factors involved in suicide behavior and ideation in early adolescents include depression, lack of Emotional stability, poor self esteem, Low self concept, hopelessness, suicide of

family members or peers, poor school performance, and family problems. Self-Concept is not innate, but is developed or constructed by the individual through interaction with the environment and reflecting on that interaction. This dynamic aspect of Self-Concept is important because it indicates that it can be modified or changed. Franken (1994).The way an individual views himself, accounts for his success/failure. Self-Concept is not a substance but a process in which a conversation between the "I" and "ME" takes place. The "ME" is the more or less integrated set of attitudes and ideas of other people which we have built together as our conscious experience and from which we also choose roles to represent our own ideas of ourselves, Uma Devi (1998). All of this review of literature suggests a study to be conducted for understanding who has a higher tendency for suicidal Ideation, that the reasons could be independently studied further.

Statement of hypothesis

H_0: There is no difference in the Self-Concept of Male and Female Students.

H_1: There is a significant difference in the levels of Suicidal Ideation of Male and Female Students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample: For the study, a total sample of 450 Male and 300 Female Students was selected purposively from 10 Engineering Colleges of Nagpur Region.

Research Design: As the study intended to study the difference between means of the Self-Concept and Suicidal Ideation of Male and Female Engineering Students. 't' test was applied and the hypothesis were tested.

Tools Used: The following tools were used to collect the data:-

Suicide Probability Scale (SPS): Constructed and standardized by John G. Cull and Wayne S. Gill (1989) the Suicide Probability Scale (SPS) gives a rapid, accurate and empirically validated measure of suicide risk in individuals over 13 years of age. The scale is composed of 36 items that describe particular feelings and behaviors. This scale gives an overall indication of suicide risk. The scale is available in English and Hindi. The internal reliability for the SPS is high .93 Internal reliability for the subscales is ranging from .62 to .89. The Hindi versions of SPS correlates significantly on various subscales. The different correlations for different scales are ; suicide ideation = .76, negative self evaluation = .68, Hostility = .65 and Hopelessness = .65, the test retest reliability after a month was found to be .72

Self-Concept Scale: This inventory was constructed and standardized by Sara swat Raj Kumar (1984). It consists of 48 items with six dimensions. Test is available in Hindi and English. This test measures 6 major areas of an individual i.e. Physical, Social, Temperamental, Moral, Educational and Intellectual Self Concept. Reliability of the inventory was found to be 0.91 (test- retest) for the total Self-Concept measure. The reliability coefficient of various dimensions varies from 0.67 to 0.88; the test has a high content validity of 0.89.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to study the self-concept among male and female engineering college students of Nagpur. Moreover, Suicidal Ideation was also studied among the same subjects. For testing the null hypothesis, the test of significance (t-test) was used to calculate the differences (if any) between Means of the two groups i.e., between the self-concept of Male and Female Engineering College Students, and the Suicidal Ideation of Male and Female Students.

Table 1. 't' Value of SELF-CONCEPT for Male and Female Students

self concept of male and female engineering college students				
Gender	Mean	sd	df	T-value
Male	170.56	15.78	643	5.708**
Female	163.87	15.68		

**t>0.01

Table 2. 't' Value of SUCIDAL IDEATION for Male and Female Students

Suicidal ideation of male and female engineering college students				
Gender	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Male	60.34	10.91	494	3.002**
Female	63.44	15.46		

**t>0.01

The calculations were done with the help of Microsoft Excel and Data tool-pack was used for statistical analysis. The following results were obtained. Table No.1 Shows the 't' value for comparing the Mean values of the two groups of Male and Female Students. At df = 643, the calculated value of 't' is 5.708, and the p-value is insignificant, so the null hypothesisH_0 i.e. there is no significant difference between the Self-Concept of Male and Female Engineering College Students is rejected (t>0.01). Comparing the means, we can surely say that the Self-Concept may seem numerically similar but statistically is significantly higher in the Male subjects as compared to the Females. Table No.2 Shows the 't' value for comparing the Mean of the two groups. The calculated 't' value at df = 494; is 3.002, which is greater than the critical value, hence we may conclude that there is a significant difference between the Suicidal Ideation of Male and Female Engineering College Students. Hence hypothesis H_1 is accepted (t>0.01). Although the mean values of both the groups i.e. Males (63.44) and Females (60.34) seem numerically similar, but statistically there is a significant difference at 0.01 level. Hence we may conclude that the difference have not come by chance and the Suicidal Ideation in Female Students is significantly higher than the males. The above results are in congruence with ample studies conducted worldwide. In-fact Rosen. A (2003) mention that the Self-Concept of Indian Males is significantly more as compared to the Females. Engineering being primarily a Male dominated area, the Self-Concept if greater than the Female Students is no surprise, but the suicidal ideation in Females was found significantly higher than the Male Students. Researchers in India and Abroad suggest that the Females have a higher level of Emotional Intelligence as compared to the Males. Which is an indicator that they are able to regulate their emotions better than the Males. In the present study the Suicidal Ideation of the Females was found to be Greater than the same Male Subjects, who's Self Concept was higher. This shows the fact that there is a strong relationship between the Self-Concept and the Suicidal Ideation, which needs to be explored further.

Limitations and recommendation

The study was conducted on a statistically large sample, but with reference to the population, the sample was small. The subjects were limited to only 10 Engineering Colleges of Nagpur region, considering the time and financial constraints. Only Self Concept was studied with reference to the Suicidal Ideation of students. Other variables like Emotional Intelligence, Personality traits can also be further studied. In-fact many other reasons for the suicidal Ideation could be further studied and explored.

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