

UHLB Academic Paper Group 4

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TITLE: SUICIDE AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the world has been developing more than ever. It is shown clearly that the youth is playing a big role in developing a country. The youth has the power to develop a country and the ones that hold the future of the country. According to Yunus and Landau (2019), youth is defined to be an individual with the age ranging from 15 to 30 years old. Youth consists of students, workers and unemployed people. They need to be grown in an ideal and suitable environment to leave a good impact on the country. As they are important to the country, the government has made many initiatives to ensure the growth of youth in their country can give them a positive impact. Even though this situation is favourable to the youth, they still tend to struggle to achieve their goal and it is important for the youth to overcome this on their own. Unfortunately, in the process of overcoming their struggles, many of them do not have the support that they need and end up in a state of hopelessness and despair. If this situation worsens, it can cause an immeasurable amount of stress towards them, which can drive them to escape from it by attempting suicide. Recently, there has been a rising surge in the rate of suicidal behaviour among young adults in Malaysia which involves approximately 12 deaths in every 100,000 population. According to the statistics from Malaysia National and Morbidity Survey 2017, it states that every 3 in 10 adults aged 16 years old and above suffer from mental issues that will eventually lead to the rising of suicidal tendencies in Malaysia (Nordin et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the reported figure was not exact as there were difficulties in ruling a death as suicide due to many different factors such as under reporting and family shame. Therefore, the rate should be in much greater numbers.

The rising surge of suicide among young adults are mainly caused by environmental factors such as stress from schoolwork, substance abuse, growing usage of technology and

social media nowadays as well as influence from family problems or conflicts between family members. These environmental factor are critical in developing the urge to commit suicide among the young adults as they are exposed to different environment when they grow up.

2.0 STRESS FROM SCHOOL WORK AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

When it comes to suicide among young adults, a major factor that is believed to cause this is due to their surroundings in school. An article written by Kok & Goh (2011) states that students generally become extremely exhausted from the amount of school work they are doing which in turn will lead to a dissatisfied outlook on life and even depression. However, we cannot outright blame the school system for the actions that our students have made. Although it is true that the hefty amount of school work given is very stressful to students, most of them tend to push harder due to the pressure of not being left out by their peers academically while others tend to do it because they are expected to get high grades by their family members. This creates a very unhealthy environment for the students and without proper guidance, most of them cannot bear the overwhelming pressure put on them. An article by Fleming (2007) gives several reasons as to why troubled teenagers are suicidal which includes depression, behavioural problems, physical abuse and issues of sexual orientation. Though all of these examples are accurate reasons for teenage suicide, the most intriguing reason was substance abuse. Substances, especially in teenagers, seem to be very popular even though it is widely known to have major drawbacks. In other words, there is less good than bad when consuming these substances, if any. Their curiosity usually arises from their need to try new things or from peer pressure and are usually most prevalent in schools and colleges. Nevertheless, substance abuse is sure to cause the abusers to be depressed and suicidal.

Booming suicide cases have always been a point of discussion and many arguments have been made to find out the reasons as to why these suicides happen, especially in schools. However, there are a few ways that the schools can do to help the suicidal students. One way to reduce suicide attempts in school is to be aware of the early signs of suicides. School staff who regularly contact the students should be taught to look out for the warning signs as this will ensure a higher chance of helping them and guiding them. The counsellors should also be prepared to help them by giving emotional support and monitoring them. Another way for schools to help suicidal students is by initiating a suicide prevention program. The program should include diagnosis for the students to find out if they have any underlying mental health issues as well as activities that will encourage them to seek help for their issues. By organizing a program like this in schools, we will also create a foundation for a much more understanding and supportive environment in school.

3.0 GROWING USAGE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

For the second point, we found that technology played a huge part in regards to suicide among young adults. Based on our research, we found out that technology has changed our lifestyle so much that it has become a main point of discussion when suicide cases are brought up. In fact, it is safe to say that the rise of suicides among youth is due to technology nowadays. This is strongly supported by the articles stating that ¹²the growth of smartphones and digital media like social media, texting and gaming are the main causes of suicide among the youth. It will cause certain people to have anxiety when meeting people and in turn will become socially awkward and distant. This later will likely develop the thought of suicide due to the immense amount of stress faced by them (Heid, 2019). Other than that, it is stated in the other article that technology indirectly leads to suicide. This is because ⁸teens now spend much less time interacting with their friends in person. The article

states that interacting with people face to face is one of the deepest wellsprings of human happiness (Twenge, 2018).

Cyberbullying and cyber harassment are also taken as part of the reason for suicide among the youth. This can be supported by a news article which occurred in Malaysia in which a teenager killed herself after being cyberbullying in social media. This serious case had been brought to Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission to investigate the case which tells us that is a big and serious case. We all know that this kind of bullying happens very frequently on social media. However, there are some ways to prevent this from happening that we can apply towards these issues such as organising awareness campaigns on social media to educate teenagers on how serious this case is. This can be done by publishing a lot of educational videos regarding the issues to educate people. Other than that, the government and NGO have also provided suicide hotlines so that people who have suicidal thoughts can consult them to have a little talk. Our job as the victim's friends and families is to support them in their time of need and advise them to call the hotline.

4.0 THE INFLUENCE OF FAMILY PROBLEMS AND CONFLICTS BETWEEN FAMILY MEMBERS

The third and the last point that we want to bring up that is related to the cause of suicide among young adults is the influence of family problems and conflicts that happen between family members. Based on the research that we have done, we have found that one of the main reasons that many young adults often contemplate suicidal are because of the experience that they are having with their family members. As stated by Yuh et. al (2019) and Consoli et. al (2013), they have found that suicidal ideation among young adults are heavily related to their relationship and conflicts with their parents. When we are talking about relationships and conflicts between family members, we should also include issues such as

loss of family members, conflicts with family members or even the lack of communication between family members due to unknown reasons. These issues are a major cause in causing suicidal thoughts among young adults because it affects their mental health heavily since our family members are the ones that are closest to us and by having these issues with them, it will surely affect our mental health badly.

While this issue is on the rise among households today, there are many steps that can be taken in order to improve the relationship between our family members and make sure that the youth is raised in a positive environment. One of the factors that are causing this problem is due to parents not knowing the proper way to raise their children. In order to combat this problem, one of the things that can be done is by having a programme that can guide the parents who have no parenting knowledge or for those who are having problems raising their children. These kinds of programs are more important than we think, especially in this day and age because there are more factors that they have to take into account in this modern era such as controlling the access of the internet for their children due to all the risks that might come with using it. As discussed in the previous point, the internet is also one of the major causes of suicidal thoughts among young adults due to reasons such as being influenced by other people to do things that are harmful and many more. Therefore, as a parent, we need to make sure that it is controlled without being too constraining to them. They should also use this opportunity to talk to them more and become closer to their children which in turn will greatly improve the relationship between the family members.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, suicide among young adults is caused by stress from schoolwork, substance abuse, heavy usage of technology and influence from family problems and conflict between family members. These factors lead to them feeling uneasy about their life, urging

them to think that the only way to escape from it is only by taking their life themselves. The solutions that have been mentioned are useful to everyone that has someone that cares about them. We also need to note that there are people that cannot escape and change their environment as they grow up. That is one of the challenges in carrying out the solution that has been given.

As our overall comment, suicide is a serious matter that everyone should take responsibility in. According to Moutier (2021), suicide risk is multifactorial with well-established risk factors. From this statement, we know that environmental factors are not the only causes of someone committing suicide. We need to evaluate each of these reasons to determine the main causes of suicide as everyone has their own struggles in life and their problems differ from one person to another. That is why we should look forward to supporting each other as well as helping one another instead of creating a toxic environment for the people around us. These kinds of issues need a deep understanding and even then, the result will not be shown immediately. We hope that everyone will spread more positivity with the people around them and make the world a better place for everyone to continue their living.

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