Suicidal intent is one of the most important predictors of completed suicide. Other factors such as gender, age, physical illness, and disability are associated with suicidal death; but most important of them is suicidal intention, and it is identified as significant risk factor of completed suicide. Therefore, knowledge of suicidal intent contributes to the clinical observation and enhances valuable evidences about a suicidal person's actual intention.

Despite the fact that suicidal intent is identified as a major risk factor of completed suicide, less attention is paid to the identification of the sources of suicidal intent. According to Zhou and Jia, suicidal communication can work as indicator of the severity of suicidal intent. Majority of victims of completed suicide were suicide communicators. The forms of suicidal communication consisted of verbal communication, behavioural communication, and suicidal notes. Other variables such as age and education tend to affect subjects' suicidal communication. Younger people with higher educational level are more likely to communicate their suicidal intent.

National rate of suicide is unknown as it is under studied subject in Pakistan. A variety of factors including social, legal, and religious, make it difficult to collect data about suicide. Other sources of information such as newspapers; and hospitals, where suicidal cases are brought for treatment, are sole medium to get information about the prevalence of suicide in Pakistani context. According to such reports, the prevalence of suicide varies from city to city and region to region. Suicide is more common among males as compared to females. Single males outnumbered married males while the condition was reverse in case of females, as majority of them were under 30 years (females were younger than males). Keeping in view the high rate of suicide in Pakistan, this study was conducted to identify the level of suicidal intent and the most commonly used method of suicide among suicide attempters.

This descriptive study was conducted at POF Hospital, Wah Cantt, from December 2012 to June 2013. A total of 49 hospitalised suicide attempters were included in the study through purposive sampling from outpatient and inpatient departments of Psychiatry and Medical Wards of POF Hospital. They were assessed for socio-demographic variables and suicidal intents by using Suicidal Intent Scale. Collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.

The mean age of suicide attempters was 22.33 ±5.2 years (ranging from 15 - 40 years). There were 23 (47%) males and 26 (53%) females. Among these, 30 (61%) unmarried, 16 (33%) married, and 3 (6%) were engaged. Majority of them (41%) attended grade 10 level education and few of them (14%) reported graduation level education. Employment status showed 14 (29%) were employed, 15 (31%) were students, 13 (27%) were housewives, 2 (4%) unemployed, and 5 (10%) reported as other category.

Regarding method of suicide, 45 (92%) and 4 (8%) participants reported self-poisoning and self-injury, respectively. A total of 11 (22%) participants reported...
past medical history, 13 (27%) reported past psychiatric history, 9 (18%) reported suicidal history in their family, 17 (35%) replied psychiatric history in their family, and 3 (6%) participants reported drug abuse history.

Out of total participants, 12 (24%), 16 (33%), and 21 (43%) participants reported mild, medium, and high level of suicidal intent, respectively. It indicates that majority of participants reported higher level of risk.

As far as gender distribution of participants regarding severity of suicidal intent, 6 (26%), 7 (30%), and 10 (43%) males reported mild, medium, and high level of suicidal intent, respectively; while 6 (23%), 9 (35%), and 11 (42%) females reported mild, medium, and high level of suicidal intent, respectively.

The present study was a scientific endeavour to understand the method of suicide and the severity of suicidal intent in hospitalised suicide attempters in Pakistan. According to the findings of the study, majority of hospitalised suicide attempters used the self-poisoning method to commit suicide. These findings are consistent with other reported findings in Pakistani context.6

The second objective was to explore the severity of suicidal intent among hospitalised suicide attempters. The present findings revealed that majority of participants exhibited high level of suicidal intent. The high level of suicidal intent was the only significant risk factor of recurrent completed suicide.1

According to these findings, self-poisoning was the most commonly used suicidal method and majority of participants reported high level of suicidal intent. Therefore, it is recommended to take favourable steps in the form of psychiatric and psychological interventions, in order to reduce the possibility of future suicide of suicide attempters in Pakistani context.

REFERENCES


