

Research Paper

A Study of Suicidal Ideation among Senior Secondary Level Students

Kanika Chauhan^{1*}, Dr. Jitendra Singh Goyal²

ABSTRACT

Scholars throughout the world are concerned about suicidal ideation because it is a prevalent problem among students. Although there is a dearth of study in this field in India, the suicide rate in India and around the world is shown in the current literature in a bleak manner. This study's goal was to gain a deeper understanding of senior secondary level students' suicidal ideas. The current study was carried out on a sample of 200 senior secondary students (100 boys and 100 girls) of class 12th from government and private schools in Meerut city. The sample selected using a multistage sampling process. The study was carried out using the descriptive survey method of research and data were collected using "Suicidal Ideation Scale (SIS), 2011 by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar". The data was analysed using the critical ratio. According to the study's findings, suicidal ideation is significantly higher among male students than female students. Additionally, students attending private schools are more likely to have suicide thoughts than students attending private schools. The results highlight the significance of emotional distress, self-awareness and stress-reduction strategies, seeking support from stakeholders, removing the stigma associated with talking about mental health issues, peer support networks, open communication, a stable and peacefully home life, and collaboration with schools. Schools should provide mental health education into the curriculum and offer mental health assistance to students in order to reduce academic pressure.

Keywords: *Suicide, Suicidal Ideation, Suicidal Thoughts, Students*

For a long time, the origin and demise of humanity have been the subject of profound fascination. The rise in self-directed violence, suicides, other people's devastation, and homicides for a wide range of reasons has prompted discussion worldwide in recent years. There are voices coming from all around the world to comprehend or lessen the same in the nation. What drives someone to purposefully harm oneself or achieve the lowest degree of destruction has baffled scientists, researchers, priests, philosophers, lawyers, physicians, social workers, and communities within geographical locations. There are no age, sex, class, or religious restrictions when it comes to suicides. Recently, suicide and intentional self-harm—once thought to be primarily cultural or societal phenomena—have been acknowledged as public health issues in every nation. Suicides have become so

¹Research Scholar, Department of Education, Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh

²Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh

*Corresponding Author

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prevalent in recent years that it is impossible to go a day without reading, hearing, or witnessing an act or attempt in the news. Teachers in India are concerned about the growing number of young people committing suicide. Teenagers have always had to cope with a variety of expectations, including social, intellectual, and personal ones, at this confusing time in their lives. They may feel as though they have nothing left to live for due to additional stressors like rivalry, poor performance, fear of punishment, and domestic abuse. Young people committing suicide are like valuable lives wasted, leaving the victim and those close to them with irreversible losses. Our society struggles with issues including youth, drug usage, bullying, peer pressure, depression, and suicide. In most of the suicide cases death is chosen because suffering becomes intolerable. With the life they lead, there is little chance of progress, change, or a better future. They have a simple answer in mind: death means there will be no more suffering. The majority of teen suicide attempts are the result of inadequate coping mechanisms for depressive symptoms. The number of students and adolescents admitted to hospitals for suicide thoughts or acts may have increased due to stressful situations and unrestricted access to information. Between 2008 and 2015, the number of students' hospital admissions for such ideas or behaviors—those aged 5 to 17—more than doubled. (Plemmons, 2017)

Suicidal Ideation

The Latin words “sui (of oneself)” and “cidium (to kill)” are the origin of the English word “Suicide”. Reber, (1985) defined suicide as “the act of taking one's own life” and as “a person who intentionally kills himself or herself.” Suicide is an act in which a person ends their own life intentionally, usually in order to get away from a situation that they find intolerable (Moore, 2000). Death by self-directed harmful behaviour with the intention of dying as a result of behaviour is known as suicide (Centre for Disease Control, 2013). Suicide is a real, widespread, and frequently occurring social event. There are examples of suicide from every society and era, from antiquity to the present day. Scientifically suicide is a psychological issue. Suicide is classified as a mood disorder. Suicidal thoughts or ideas of terminating one's life are often momentary and based on the individual's level of suffering. During periods of extreme pain and suffering, suicidal thoughts may become more frequent, strong, detailed, and particular. It might include thoughts of how one would end one's life and what it would be like to destroy oneself. Additionally, it may involve feelings of suicide or a desire to end one's life (Paladino & Minton, 2008).

Suicidal ideation is a crucial stage in the suicide process because it initiates the path of suicide and provides the opportunity for both successful suicide attempts and actual suicides (Harris & Barraclough, 1997). Suicidal ideation, a suicide plan, a suicide attempt, and completed suicide are all parts of the suicide process. (Vilhjalmsson, Kristjansdottir, & Sveinbjarnardottir, 1998). The stages involved in committing suicide are shown in the following figure-1.

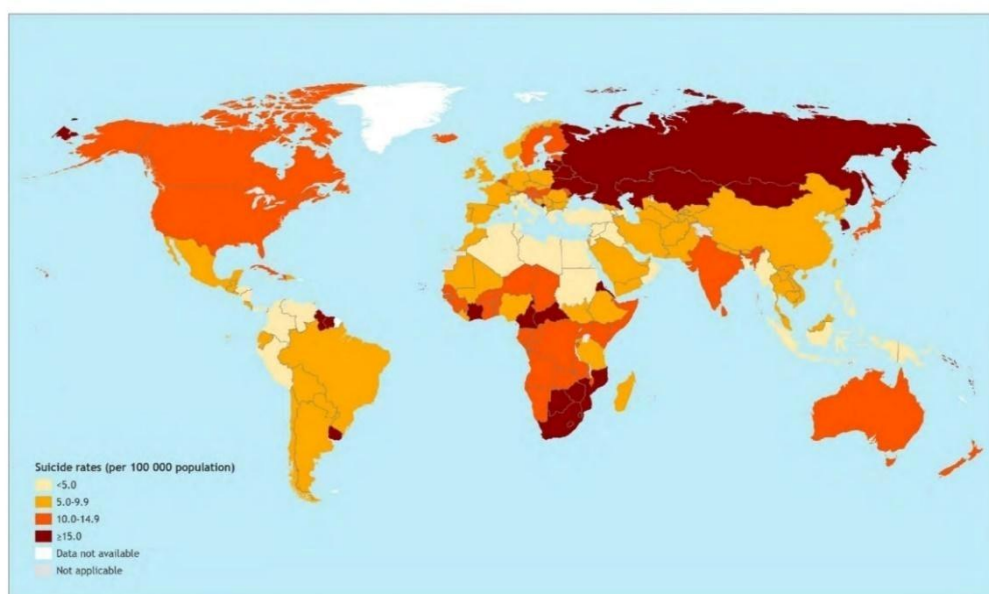


Figure 1. The stages involved in committing suicide

According to the suicide process pyramid, suicidal ideation is the first step towards a successful suicide. Thus, it's critical to identify suicidal ideation or the early stages of the suicide process so that preventive steps can be implemented before a plan or attempt is executed (Arria, et al., 2009). Therefore, preventing suicide action requires managing suicidal ideation (Palmer, 2004).

Suicide Across the World

A major global public health concern is suicide. Globally, an estimated 7,03,000 people die by suicide every year. One of the most common causes of death in the world is suicide; more people die from suicide than from HIV/AIDS, cancer, disputes, and homicide combined. In 2019, suicide was responsible for 1.3% of all deaths, or more than one death out of every 100. The fourth most common cause of mortality for people aged 15 to 29 is suicide (WHO, 2019).



Source: WHO Global Health Estimates 2000-2019

Figure 2. Age-standardized suicide rates in world (per 100 000 population), both sexes, 2019

Source: WHO Global Health Estimates 2000-2019

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Suicide at Indian Scenario

Every year, about one million people in our country take their own lives. Numerous things might lead to suicides, such as problem with one's profession, isolation, abuse, violence, family issues, mental illnesses, alcoholism, loss of money, chronic pain, etc. A total of 1,70,924 suicides were recorded nationwide in 2022, indicating a 4.2% rise over 2021 and a 3.3% increase in the suicide rate among 2022 population (NCRB 2022).

Sl. No.	Year	Total Number of Suicides	Mid-Year Projected Population (in Lakh [*])	Rate of Suicides (Col.3/Col.4)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	2018	1,34,516	13233.8 [#]	10.2
2	2019	1,39,123	13376.1 [#]	10.4
3	2020	1,53,052	13533.9 ^{\$}	11.3
4	2021	1,64,033	13671.8 ^{\$}	12.0
5	2022	1,70,924	13797.5 ^{\$}	12.4

Figure 3. Number of Suicides, growth of Population and Rate of Suicides in India during 2018-2022

Source: National Crime Records Bureau, 2022

A young person's death from intense dissatisfaction or hopelessness is devastating to friends, family, and the community. Numerous factors can lead to a teen's suicide attempt or actual death. Although suicide is uncommon in children, the frequency of suicides and suicide attempts increases significantly during adolescence. In 2022, there were 4616 male and 5588 female victims of suicide who were under the age of 18. Figure 4 shows the distribution of suicides by age group in 2022 (NCRB, 2022).

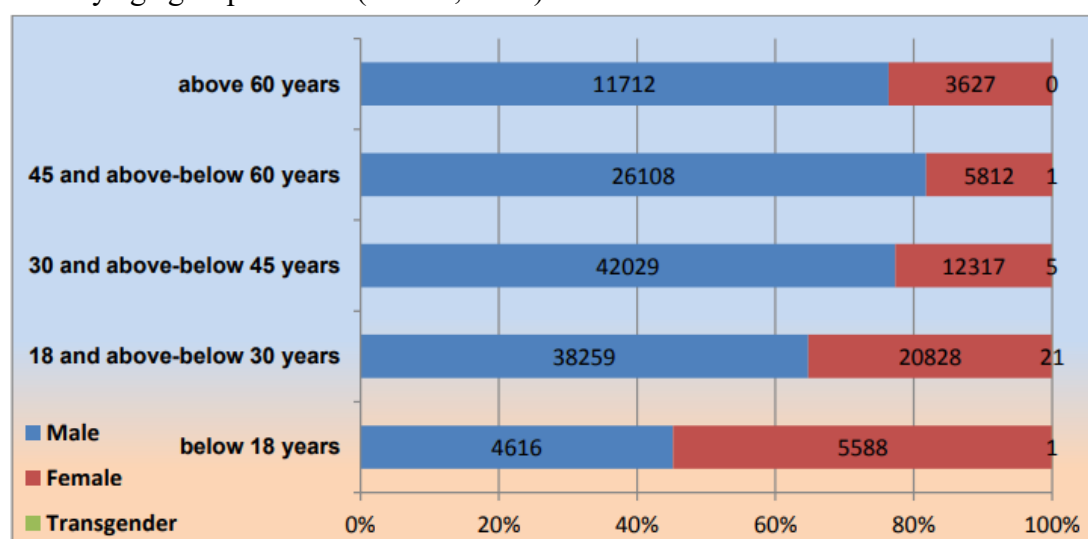


Figure 4. Suicide Victims by Gender and Age Group in India during 2022

Source: National Crime Records Bureau, 2022

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The proportion of students who were suffered of suicide was 7.6%. Figure 5 shows the distribution of suicides in 2022 (NCRB, 2022).

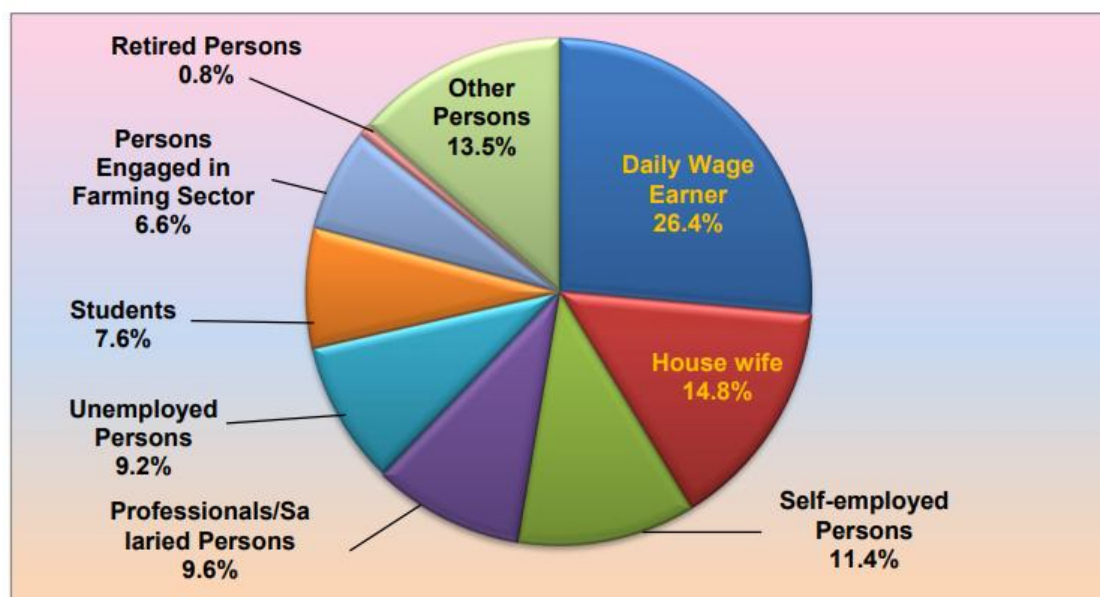


Figure 5. Percentage Distribution of Suicide Victims by Profession in India During 2022

Source: National Crime Records Bureau, 2022

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous studies have been carried out on the suicidal ideation variable in addition to other variables for the different population shown in table 1 below.

Table 1 Reviewing Existing Literature

Author(s)/year	Aim of the Study	Findings
Ghosh & Bhattacharjee (2022)	They make an effort to determine the demographic factors associated with teenage suicidal thoughts in Tripura, India.	This study found that 9.6% of teenagers have suicidal thoughts, influenced by gender, residence, substance use, and family environment. Boys, urban dwellers, substance users, and non-peaceful households had the highest rates. Suicidal thoughts are not significantly correlated with family type, wealth, community, or number of children.
Yadav & Srivastava (2020)	The study's aim was to look at the connection between academic stress and suicidal ideation of students.	This research found a strong link between suicidal thoughts and academic stress, influenced by peer pressure, family dynamics, addiction, and competitive environments.
Chandra & Khokhar (2019)	The study's aim is to find out how family dynamics and parenting practices relate to adolescent suicidal thoughts.	The findings showed that parenting, the status of siblings, and educational attainment all have a major impact on suicidal ideation in teenagers and that these factors interact to influence suicidal ideation in adolescence.

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Huang et al. (2019)	They looked at how parenting practices, life stress, and depressive moods in children relate to suicidal ideation.	The results indicate that girls were more likely than boys to have suicidal thoughts. Suicidal ideation was substantially linked to two or more stressful life events, a high degree of depression, authoritative and authoritarian parenting approaches, and a high level of perceived environmental stress in males. Suicidal ideation in females was significantly associated with a high amount of perceived environmental stress, a high degree of depression, and an authoritarian parenting style.
Pandey et al. (2019)	Determining the prevalence of suicidal ideation and attempts among Nepali teenage students was the aim of this study.	According to the study, school-age teenagers in Nepal had a comparatively high rate of suicide thoughts and attempt.
Singh & Vinodiya (2019)	The study's objectives were to investigate teenage suicidal ideation in relation to psychological hardiness.	The findings of the study showed a strong correlation between adolescents' suicidal thoughts and psychological hardiness. The study shows that adolescents' suicidal ideas are significantly influenced by their psychological hardiness.
Dhillon & Mehra (2018)	Finding the predictors of adolescents' suicidal ideation was the study's goal.	The study shows how cognitive factors—such as depression, despair, and emotional autonomy—combine to predict teenage suicidal thoughts. However, hardiness acts as a barrier against the rise of these harmful thoughts.
Olaseni (2018)	The aim of the study was addressing rumination and academic hardiness as possible predictors of suicidal ideation in adolescents in Lagos State, Nigeria.	The study's findings demonstrated a substantial correlation between academic hardiness and rumination and suicidal thoughts. Adolescents can get insight into how their perspective on life is impacted by rumination and a lack of academic hardiness.
Abdollahi et al. (2017)	The study aims to elucidate the relationship between suicidal ideation and hopelessness and hardiness.	According to structural equation modelling, there was a positive correlation between suicidal ideation and college students' high hopelessness and poor hardiness levels. The association between hardiness and suicidal thoughts was partially mediated by hopelessness. Additionally, hopelessness and suicidal thoughts were mediated by hardiness.
Pereira & Cardoso (2017)	The study objective was to ascertain psychological variables that are predictive of suicidal thoughts among college students.	Suicidal ideation is significantly predicted by loneliness and depression.

Rational of the Study

There are many risk factors for suicide, making it a complicated topic to research, particularly in young people. Suicide is significantly predicted by suicidal ideation, planning, and attempts (Zhang & Zhou, 2011). Complex connections between a person's biological, genetic, psychological, societal, and environmental elements can lead to suicide.

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It is now a more significant public health concern that requires prompt and appropriate response from everyone, but especially from educators, psychologists, counsellors, social workers, and legislators. Although there is a dearth of high-quality information on suicide in India, it appears to be a major and growing public health issue. When compared to other nations worldwide, India has the greatest population of adolescents. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reports that India's suicide rate rose significantly from 9.9 per lakh to 12.4 per lakh between 2017 and 2022. According to NCRB data, 13,089 students committed suicide in 2021. This represents a 70% increase over the 7,696 student suicides that occurred in 2011. In India, the incidence of student suicides has been continuously increasing since 2011. According to NCRB report, one student in India kills themselves every hour. Children cannot be emotionally and psychologically prepared for all of the changes in the world by their parents or schools. Therefore, it is essential that we as a community endeavour to foster a good atmosphere. Governments and organisations must be supported in their efforts to educate young people about mental health issues and develop coping mechanisms.

The example offered several reasons for the suicide. These causes, which mental health specialists call acute stress factors, include exam stress, academic failure, peer and family pressure, and exam anxiety. Based on the information above, the aim of this study is to find out the reasons for suicide and suicidal ideation by senior secondary students and to compare the reasons for suicide by male and female students. Suicidal thoughts or actions in kids are therefore a severe problem. suicidal behaviour in students can be avoided with effective strategies that address high-risk students and important indicators that affect their behaviour. As a result, the findings of this study might help in the development of preventative strategies that effectively maintain the health of students. Future and current efforts to prevent suicide among senior secondary students will be significantly impacted by the findings of this study.

Statement of the Problem

“A Study of Suicidal Ideation among Senior Secondary Level Students.”

Objectives

1. To compare suicidal ideation of male and female students at senior secondary level.
2. To compare suicidal ideation of government and private students at senior secondary level.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in mean scores of suicidal ideations of male and female students at senior secondary level.
2. There is no significant difference in mean scores of suicidal ideations of government and private students at senior secondary level.

Delimitations of the Study

1. The study is delimited to Meerut City of Uttar Pradesh.
2. The study is delimited to 200 students of class XII.
3. The study is delimited to UP Board students only.

RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive Survey Research method is employed in the present investigation.

Population

In the present research study, population refers to the number of students studying in the different senior secondary schools affiliated to the U.P. Board of Meerut City. Both government and private schools of U.P. Board have been selected for the study.

Sample and Sampling Method

The sample of the study consists of 200 students (100 boys and 100 girls each) of class 12th from U.P. Board schools of Meerut city. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample.

Tool

The following tool is used to collect the relevant data:

“Suicidal Ideation Scale (SIS), 2011 by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar.”

Statistical Techniques

In the present study, the researcher has used Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD) and Critical Ratio (CR) for the analysis and interpretation of the objectives and the hypotheses.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Hypothesis 1 - There is no significant difference in mean scores of suicidal ideation of male and female students at senior secondary level. Suicidal ideation has been verified with the help of critical ratio; the result obtained from the statistical analysis is shown in table 2-

Table 2. Mean, SD and CR-Value Regarding suicidal Ideation of Male and Female Students

Sr. No.	Name of Group	N	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	df	Critical Ratio (CR)	Level of Significance at 0.05 level
1.	Male students	100	59.11	16.42	198	3.439	Significant
2.	Female students	100	50.63	18.39			

*CR Value at 0.05 level & $df = 198$ is 1.97

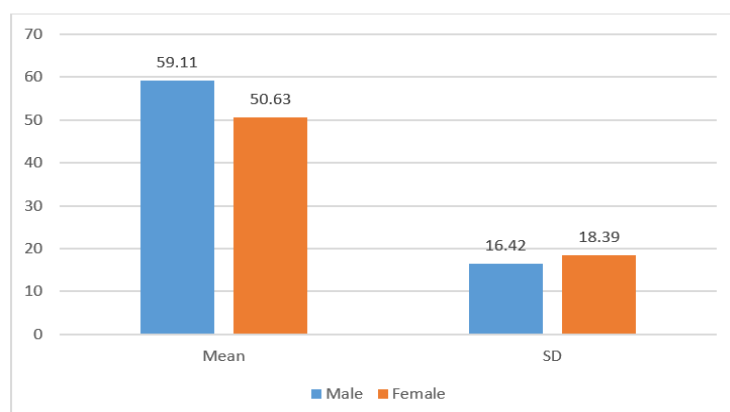


Figure 6. Mean and SD Regarding Suicidal Ideation of Male and Female Students

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Interpretation: Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation, and CR value of suicidal ideation of male and female students. Male students have high mean score (M=59.11) in comparison to Female students (M=50.63). The tabulated t-value at 0.05 level of significance and $df = 198$ is 1.97. Hence, the calculated t-value = 3.439 is found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance and $df = 198$. Therefore, the null hypothesis i.e., “There is no significant difference in mean scores of suicidal ideation of male and female students at senior secondary level” is rejected.

Discussion: The above result means male students have a substantially greater suicidal ideation than female students. The factor may be societal norms around masculinity that discourage males from asking for help or expressing emotions, potentially exacerbating feelings of isolation and hopelessness. The fact that the same issues like family conflict, lack of support, or parental expectations can impact males differently and potentially lead to higher suicidal ideation, should also explain for this.

Hypothesis 2 - There is no significant difference in mean scores of suicidal ideation of government and private students at senior secondary level. Suicidal ideation has been verified with the help of critical ratio; the result obtained from the statistical analysis is shown in table 3 –

Table 3. Mean, SD and CR-Value Regarding Suicidal Ideation of Government and Private Students

Sr. No.	Name of Group	N	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	df	Critical Ratio (CR)	Level of Significance at 0.05 level
1.	Government students	100	49.78	18.66	198	4.187	Significant
2.	Private students	100	59.96	15.59			

*CR Value at 0.05 level & $df = 198$ is 1.97

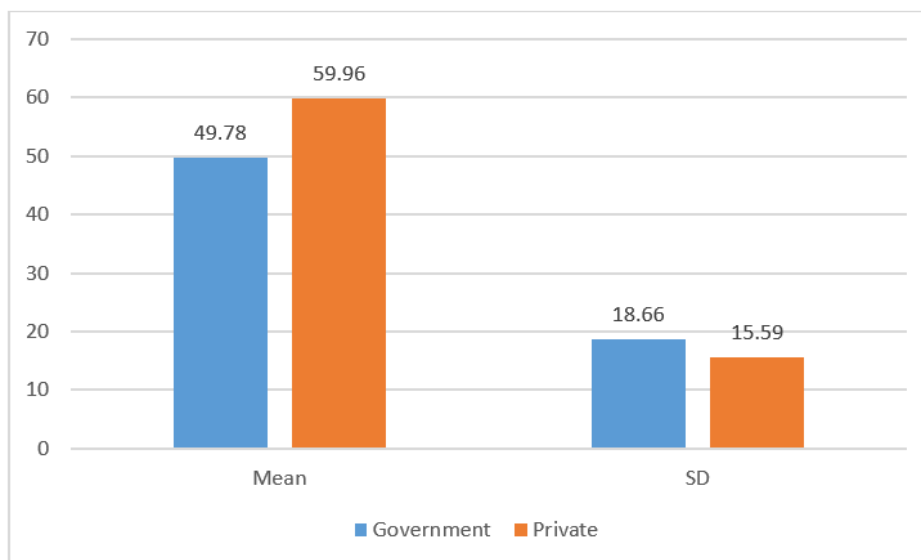


Figure 7. Mean and SD Regarding Suicidal Ideation of Government and Private Students

Interpretation: Table 3 shows the mean, standard deviation, and CR value of suicidal ideation of government and private school' students. Private schools' students have high mean score ($M=59.96$) in comparison to government schools' students ($M=49.78$). The tabulated t-value at 0.05 level of significance and $df = 198$ is 1.97. Hence, the calculated t-value = 4.187 is found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance and $df = 198$. Therefore, the null hypothesis i.e., "There is no significant difference in mean scores of suicidal ideation of government and private students at senior secondary level" is rejected.

Discussion: The above result indicates that the suicidal ideation of private schools' students is higher than that of government schools' students. One possibility is that private schools tend to have demanding academic standards and high -pressure environment, which can lead to additional sources of stress and mental health issues for students. Another reason could be, students in private schools might come from higher socio-economic background, where they might have higher expectations or pressure and students from government schools may have different stressor or support system.

CONCLUSION

The results indicate that male students experience significantly higher level of suicidal ideation in comparison to female students. The main reasons for this could be societal norms around masculinity that discourage males from asking for help or expressing emotions, potentially exacerbating feelings of isolation and hopelessness. Also, other result indicates that the suicidal ideation of private schools' students is higher than that of government schools' students. The reasons behind could be private schools tend to have demanding academic standards and high -pressure environment, which can lead to additional sources of stress and mental health issues for students. By addressing the specific needs of male students and students in private schools, alongside enhancing overall mental health support systems, schools and communities can help reduce suicidal ideation and promote the well-being of all students.

Educational Implications

These results underline the necessity of a thorough and multidimensional strategy to stop suicidal thoughts in students. Lastly, strategies for dealing with emotional distress, self-awareness and techniques for dealing with stress, asking help from supportive stakeholders, breaking the stigma of discussing mental health concerns, and peer support networks are invaluable for students traversing life on campus. Open communication, an organized and stable home life and cooperation with schools all demonstrate that families have an important part to play. Schools should provide mental health services help ease academic pressure and add mental health education to the curriculum and train staff to look for warning signs.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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