



## A STUDY ON THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SUICIDAL IDEATION AND RESILIENCE AMONG DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to explore the association between suicidal ideation and resilience among different age groups. The data was collected from 80 individuals 20 males and 20 females belonged to the age group of 18-24 years and 20 males and 20 females belonged to the age group of 25-30 years using the 'Suicidal Ideation Scale' by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar and 'Resilience scale' by Smith, et al, 2008. The obtained data was organized for statistical analysis. Pearson's correlation was computed to check the relationship between Suicidal Ideation and Resilience. The results revealed that there is a significant correlation found between Suicidal Ideation and Resilience.

**Keywords:** Age, Gender, Suicidal Ideation, Resilience.

### INTRODUCTION

Suicide is a social and mental health problem and a notable public health problem in the present time, causing almost half of all violent deaths. Suicide is a continuously talked about subject in our society. The word "suicide" is derived from two Latin words, "sui" meaning of oneself, and "cidium" meaning killing or slaying. Under Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code attempted suicide is considered a criminal offence. It states that "Whoever attempts to commit suicide and does any act towards the commission of such offence, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine, or with both." Suicide has become a critical factor in our society during the ongoing pandemic. People are locked tight in their homes, with sometimes no one to share their woes. Suicide is described as the voluntary and intentional decision of an individual in taking one's own life.

**Suicidal ideation** is defined as thinking about or planning but it does not include the final act of suicide, according to American Psychiatric Association (2003). People who are completely hopeless or believe they can no longer cope with their life situation may have these types of thoughts. Suicidal ideation is a common medical term for suicidal thoughts, which can be as detailed as a structured plan but do not result in the suicidal act itself. It can be characterized as ranging from relatively mild general thoughts about death and wishing to die to serious ideation about specific plans and means of taking one's own life. Suicidal ideation, on the other hand, encompasses more than just suicidal wishes and plans. (Brazier, 2020)

### Factors contributing individuals to Suicidal ideation.

Many different factors can be associated with suicidal ideation. Sometimes thoughts strike when an individual is feeling hopeless and is out of control of life and or like it has no meaning or purpose. This may be due to demographic, socio-environmental, psychological, and behavioral factors. Some possibilities to commit suicide are drug and alcohol abuse, traumatic experience, mental illness, personality disorders, bullying, racism, unemployment, financial issues, family history, social isolation, or relationship problems.

A person who is experiencing or could experience suicidal ideation or thoughts may show the following signs or symptoms. Feeling or appearing to feel trapped or hopeless, having mood swings, either happy or sad, talking about suicide or dying, revenge, guilt, or shame, experiencing changes in personality, routine, or sleeping patterns, engaging in risky behavior, such as driving carelessly, taking alcohol & drugs, getting hold of a gun, medications, or substances that could end a life, experiencing anxiety, depression, panic attacks, and impaired concentration, increased isolation, saying goodbye to others as if it were the last time.

### Theories of suicidal ideation

- Joiner's Interpersonal theory of suicide: This theory suggests the critical role of demographic factors. The theory proposes that suicide is the result of thwarted belongingness and perceived burdensomeness coupled with the capability to engage in suicidal behaviors. Thwarted belongingness occurs when the fundamental need for humans to belong is not met. Perceived burdensomeness refers to a person's perception of being a burden to others, including, but not limited to, family members and friends.
- Three-step theory (3ST): Klonsky and May (2014) argued that suicide theory, research, and prevention should be guided by an "ideation-to-action" framework. According to this viewpoint, (a), the emergence of suicidal ideation and (b) the



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progression from suicidal ideation to suicide attempt are distinct processes with distinct explanations. The 3 steps are as follows; First, the theory proposes that suicidal ideation is caused by a combination of pain (typically psychological pain) and hopelessness. Second, connectedness is a key protective factor against escalating ideation among those experiencing both pain and hopelessness. Third, the theory sees the progression from ideation to attempt as aided by dispositional, acquired, and practical factors that contribute to the capacity to attempt suicide.

**Resilience** is “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors”. (Building your resilience., 2020) It is best described as “bounce-back-ability”. It is the ability to recover quickly from difficulties, adapt to life’s adversities and cope with the mundane stresses of everyday living. Resilience signifies the ability to bounce back from or withstand major or multiple stresses in life. Essentially, resilience is the capacity to thrive despite adversity and to overcome the odds.

**Resilience training**

Resilience is not a trait that everyone has but it is the thoughts, behaviors, and actions that can be learned and developed by all. Resilience is necessary for many reasons: it allows us to build protective mechanisms against overwhelming experiences, it helps us maintain equilibrium in our lives through challenging or stressful times, and it can also shield us from the creation of certain mental health problems and issues. Resilience training teaches you how to respond to, control, and heal from stress and trauma. Despite the fact that it is a relatively new training tool, it has evolved to serve thousands of people each year. It can only take a few short sessions of a few hours each. The content and duration of the training will vary, but they will also determine your resiliency variables. They will also provide you with resources and guidance to help you develop your coping skills and social network, allowing you to better process stressful events and interactions.

Resilience training seeks to help people adopt different ways of thinking, to become more self-aware, and improve skills for dealing with and recovering from adversity. These goals are met by using methods such as, stress reduction methods, coping skills, self-awareness, and taking positive actions. Meditation, yoga, stretching, deep breathing, and other forms of relaxing activities are among the stress-reduction approaches offered by resiliency training. Coping skills such as spending time with family and friends, counseling work with certain people but not for all, or engaging in hobbies that give a moment of relaxation and peace from depressive feelings through hard periods to boost resiliency. Self-awareness helps in knowing yourself and will assist you in understanding your own strong and weak points, allowing you to set achievable goals. It often aids in improvement and it allows you to see what you might like to do about yourself. When you realize your strengths as well as your areas for growth, you will adapt accordingly, learn additional skills as needed, and make positive choices that embody who you are. It helps in seeing adversity as insurmountable it helps to reframe thoughts and look at subtle opportunities to address the issue and make changes that would improve. Being positive involves aiming to maintain a constructive mood in the midst of hardship. Focusing on the potential results makes the individual realize that the difficulties they are experiencing are only fleeting and that they have the skills to solve them.

**Relationship between suicidal ideation and resilience**

Suicidal thoughts, behaviors, and deaths are a major source of personal, public, and societal concern around the world. Although preventing suicide deaths is of the utmost importance, it is also critical to consider the distress that people experience when they have suicidal thoughts. Some people with severe mental health problems, on the other hand, do not have suicidal thoughts, plans, or urges and do not attempt or die by suicide. This is due to resilience. Resilience is an important personality feature that is thought to be protective against the development of a psychiatric disorder. When individuals face stressful life events, positive reactions and attitudes are important life adaptation capabilities. Resilience represents such capacities, which can be viewed as an inherent trait or acquired ability that is built up during the growth process. Individuals with resilience might display more positive coping skills against negative environmental impacts. The resiliency protective and risk factors influence an individual’s adaptive mechanism when facing stressful situations. While stress can lead to vulnerability, high levels of resilience can help people respond to stressful situations in a positive way that leads to better outcomes. Furthermore, the resilience construct has several dimensions, and people may use various types of protective mechanisms to tolerate stressful situations, such as having positive self-esteem, good emotional adjustment ability, good social interaction skills, being independent, empathetic, hopeful, and optimistic, and having the good problem-solving ability and having family and friends’ support.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**“Age and Gender difference on Resilience among School going Adolescents.”**

This study explores the effect of age and gender on resilience among adolescents in Kerala, India. The surveys were administered to 484 male and 487 female students to assess the level of resilience. A systematic random sampling procedure was



used to select the students from five schools that were randomly chosen locality in Kerala. The main instrument used for this study is Bharathiar University Resilience Scale (BURS) (Form A). This research established the impact of age and gender on scores of resilience for school adolescents which revealed that there is no gender difference in resilience among adolescents on the other hand there exists a difference between age and the score of resilience. (Sreehari R, 2015)

**“Psychological Factors as Predictors of Suicidal Ideation among Adolescents in Malaysia”**

The present study examined psychological factors such as depression, anxiety, and stress as predictors for suicidal ideation among adolescents. A cross-sectional study was conducted on 190 students (103 males and 87 females), aged 15 to 19 years old from two different schools in Kuala Lumpur. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale 21-item version (DASS-21) was used to measure depression, anxiety, and stress among the students, and the Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation (BSS) to measure suicidal ideation. The results indicated that there were significant correlations between depression, anxiety, and stress with suicidal ideation. However, only depression was identified as a predictor for suicidal ideation. (Ibrahim, 2014)

**"Resilience, Suicidal Ideation, and Depression in Adolescents"**

The purpose of this paper was to study the relationship between Resilience, Suicidal Ideation, and Depression in Adolescents. 70 participants were selected whose ages ranged from 17 to 21 years. The subjects were selected regardless of socio-economic and demographic factors. The tools used were Bharathiar University Resilience Scale Form A (Dr. Annalaxmi Narayanan), Suicidal Ideation Scale (SIS, Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia, and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar, 2011), and Mental Depression Scale (MDS, L.N Dubey, 1993). The study revealed a significant correlation between resilience and suicidal ideation and between suicidal ideation and depression. A significant gender difference was found on resilience, but not on suicidal ideation and depression among adolescents. (Kamble, 2015)

**"Perceived Stress, Suicidal ideation, and Resilience among Pre-University Students "**

The objective of the study was to study levels of perceived stress, suicidal ideation, and resilience among male and female pre-university students from Commerce and Science streams. The data was collected from 60 students (30 males and 30 females- further sub-divided into 15 males and 15 females from Commerce stream; 15 males and 15 females from science). The scales used to measure were 'The Perceived Stress Scale' by Sheldon Cohen, 'Suicidal Ideation Scale' by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar and 'Resilience scale' by Neil J.T and Dias K.L. The results revealed that there is no gender difference in Perceived stress, Suicidal Ideation, and Resilience among Commerce and Science students. The result also revealed that there is no significant relationship between Perceived Stress and Suicidal Ideation, and between Perceived Stress and Resilience; however, there is a significant relationship between Suicidal Ideation and Resilience. (Sridharan, 2017)

**“Resilience to suicidal ideation in psychosis: Positive self-appraisals buffer the impact of hopelessness.”**

This study aimed to examine whether a proposed resilience factor, positive self-appraisals of the ability to cope with emotions, difficult situations, and the ability to gain social support, could buffer against the negative impact of hopelessness amongst individuals with psychosis-spectrum disorders when measured cross-sectionally and to understand the relationship of resilience to suicidal ideation in psychosis. A total of 90 participants with schizophrenia-spectrum disorders were recruited into the study. The participants were administered with Beck Hopelessness Questionnaire (BHS; Beck, Weissman, Lester, & Trexler, 1974), Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation (BSS; Beck & Steer, 1991), and Resilience Appraisals Scale (RAS; Johnson et al., 2010). The results revealed that positive self-appraisals were found to have a moderate association between hopelessness and suicidal ideation and that positive self-appraisals may improve the identification of individuals at high risk of suicidality and may be an important area to target for suicide interventions. (J. Johnson, 2010)

**SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The ongoing pandemic of Covid-19 has led individuals to encounter various personal and environmental challenges in everyday life. The flow of information about the pandemic spreads fast, some of which are facts and many of which are rumors. People differ in their interaction with acute stress and conflicts, according to their abilities to adapt and vulnerability to mental illness. The coping strategies in stressful events vary among individuals. Individuals are vulnerable to sudden changes like, physical isolation, closing of educational institutions and workplaces, losing loved ones, and unforeseen changes in their lives. Due to this excessive pressure, they are affected by psychological issues like uneasiness, loneliness, dissatisfaction, emotional suffering in the real world. In this context, suicidal thoughts are bound to be triggered among individuals, and they cannot often cope with them. However, if the individuals are resilient enough, their perception of stress would be low and their purpose towards life would be high. Keeping this in view the present study is going to be helpful to understand the suicidal ideation and resilience among different age groups and how closely are these factors associated with each other.



## METHODOLOGY

### Aim

To assess the association between suicidal ideation and resilience among different age groups using the ‘Suicidal Ideation Scale’ by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia, and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar and ‘Brief Resilience Scale’ by Smith, et al.

### Objectives

- To study the correlation of suicidal ideation with resilience.

### Hypothesis

- Suicidal Ideation and Resilience will significantly and negatively be related to each other.

**Research Design:** The present study examined the association between Suicidal ideation and resilience among different age groups using empirical research design.

### Variables

1. Attributes — Gender
2. Variables – Suicidal ideation, Resilience

### Sample

The Purposive Sampling technique was used to select the sample. Overall, a total of 80 participants were chosen as the sample. Among them, 20 males and 20 females belonged to the age group of 18-24 years and 20 males and 20 females belonged to the age group of 25-30 years.

### Tools

**Suicidal Ideation Scale (SIS, Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia, and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar, 2011)** The scale consists of 25 items with five alternative options like a vise, 'Strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree" and is used to measure the suicidal ideation of an individual. Among 25 items 21 items worded positively and scored 5, 4,3,2,1, and 4 items worded negatively and scored vice versa of positive items. Interpretation of suicidal ideation is given from very low to very high suicidal ideation, the high score on the scale indicates high suicidal ideation and the low score indicates low suicidal ideation.

### Brief Resilience Scale (BRS, Smith, et al, 2008)

The scale contains six items scored on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4= agree and 5 = strongly agree. Items 2, 4, and 6 are negatively phrased and items 1,3, and 5 are positively phrased. Total scores were the mean scores of all answers and thus ranged from one to five. Higher scores in this scale indicate a better-developed ability of resilience.

### Procedure

With the purpose to collect the data for the study, the participants were comfortably seated and were debriefed about the topic. Participants were contacted personally to get their consent before giving them the tools to assess their levels of suicidal ideation and resilience. With their consent, the purpose of the study was briefed, and rapport was established. Their information was obtained for the purpose which contained their name, age, and gender. Ethical issues like confidentiality of information and convenience of subjects were strictly followed for the collection of data. Subsequently, the Suicidal Ideation scale and Brief Resilience scale were administered as per standard directions and the participants were asked to fill it honestly. They were asked to give spontaneous responses. There was no time limit as such, but the subjects were asked to fill it as soon as possible. After the participants finished responding, the questionnaires were collected back, and the subjects were thanked for their participation and cooperation.

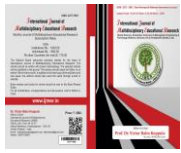
### Data analysis

The raw data were keyed into the SPSS program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and analyzed. Descriptive analysis was mainly used to describe the findings of the data, such as mean and standard deviation. Inferential analysis was done using Pearson correlation coefficient.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Problem

The objective of the present study was to explore the correlation of suicidal ideation with resilience, the effect on age and gender among different age groups.



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Objectives

To study the correlation of suicidal ideation with resilience.

Hypothesis

To assess the hypothesis, the raw data were keyed into the SPSS program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and analyzed. The mean and standard deviation for suicidal ideation and resilience scores was done using descriptive analysis. The correlation was measured by using the Pearson correlation method to explore the relation between resilience and suicidal ideation.

The study was conducted on a sample size of 80 individuals out of which 20 males and 20 females belonging to the age category 18-24 years and 20 males and 20 females belonging to the age category 25-30 years. The sampling method was random, and the Purposive sampling technique was used to collect data. The Suicidal Ideation Scale and Brief Resilience Scale were administered to the individuals. The Suicidal Ideation scale was developed by two psychologists Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar which was standardized in the year 2011. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items and was scored on a 5-point Likert scale. The scoring ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The Brief Resilience Scale was developed by Smith and his colleagues which was standardized in the year 2008. The questionnaire consisted of six items and was scored on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Items 2, 4, and 6 were negatively phrased, and the others were positively phrased. Total scores were mean scores of all answers and thus ranged from one to five. Further, the data was collected and analyzed using various differential and inferential analysis techniques.

- Hypothesis: Suicidal Ideation and Resilience will significantly and negatively be related to each other.

Table 1: Showing correlation between Resilience and Suicidal Ideation.

Table with 4 columns: Variable, Correlation Type, SIS Total score, BRS Total score. Rows include Pearson Correlation, Sig. (2-tailed), and N for both SIS and BRS. A note at the bottom states: \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 reveals the correlation coefficient between Suicidal ideation and Resilience among different age groups. Results show that there is a significant difference between suicidal ideation and resilience (r = -0.326, p<0.05). It revealed that it is moderately negative and statistically significant. Present results are consistent with previous research done by Nasrin Izadiniaa (2010) which showed that an individual's resiliency reduction increases the possibility of suicidal thoughts. Resiliency is an important factor in preventing common psychological disorders and it seems that it applies its effect in increasing the thoughts of suicide because by the reduction of this factor in every person the risk for emergence of other mental disorders increases and subsequently thoughts of suicide may follow. J. Johnson (2010) measured Positive self-appraisals the sub-scale of Resilience Appraisals Scale in his research and it revealed that the positive self – appraisal moderates the association between hopelessness and suicidal ideation. Individuals with high levels of positive self-appraisals were significantly less likely to lead to suicidality. Thus, the hypothesis which states- "Suicidal Ideation and Resilience will significantly and negatively be related to each other" is accepted. This shows that an increase in resilience decreases suicidal ideation in individuals.

CONCLUSION

The research aimed to study the association between suicidal ideation and resilience among different age groups. Suicidal Ideation Scale (SIS) developed by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia, and Dr. Vibhuti Bhatnagar and Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) developed by Smith, et al, was administered on the individuals. The following conclusions were reached based on the findings of the study.

- Suicidal Ideation and Resilience were found to be significantly and negatively related to each other.



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