

Personality Traits, Burnout and Suicidal Ideation among University Students in Gilgit

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ABSTRACT

World Health Organization reports that more than 804, 4000 people took their own lives in 2012. Suicide is the major public health challenge faced by contemporary world. The issue is faced by both developing and developed world. Pakistan is also facing this social threat but due to very limited research, Gilgit Baltistan, is in spot light because of its high suicides rates from last few years. The key focus of this research was to find out possible relationship between personality traits, burnout and suicidal ideation among female students of Karakorum international university Gilgit. Quantitative research method was used to conduct this research. Furthermore, data from 300 participants was collected by using convenience sampling technique with the help of questionnaire. Data was analyzed to through using SPSS version 21. findings showed that there was no significance correlation between neuroticism and suicidal ideation. It also revealed that there was no vital relationship between occupational tiredness, depersonalization and suicidal ideation. Results of study also revealed that openness was positively significant with suicidal ideation.

Key words: Personality Traits, Burnout, Suicidal Ideation, Female, Gilgit-Baltistan

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INTRODUCTION

Suicide is measured to be a chief health concern of public and it may be recognized under fluctuating types namely suicide ideation, suicide attempts or suicide (WHO, 2014). As per annual report namely Preventing suicide, presented and published by World Health Organization more than 804,000 people lost their lives in the year 2012 which ultimately establishes that 11.4 percent people in a population of 100000 die due to suicide and when this ratio is further categorized into males and females it becomes 15.0 percent for the males and 8.0 percent for the females. People of any age group can fall prey of it but mortality rate with respect to people aged 15-29 years is higher and among this group. Suicide is the second most responsible factor of death (WHO, 2014).

According to the data available with World Bank in the year 2014, Pakistan was the 6th populous country in the World with a population of 185 million people, 240 people living per square kilometer out of which 38 percent people are living in urban areas with an income of 5090 dollars (World Bank, 2016). Suicidal ideation denotes to feelings of suicide and it leads suicidal attempts, with more than a third of youngsters in the United States, in the latter category suicidal attempts, finally committing suicide Moreover, thoughts of injuring or killing oneself are also labeled as suicidal feelings conventionally, there are three features of suicide, suicidal feelings, try to obligate and complete suicide. This dissimilarity clarifies relationship between suicidal ideation and suicide (Nock, et al., 2013).

Burnout is a mental condition developing as a persistent reaction to continuing personal stressors on the job. It involves the following three dimensions, the overwhelming exhaustion, feelings of pessimism and disinterest from the job and, and a sagacity of hopelessness and absence of achievement. The importance of this three-dimensional model is that it clearly spaces the individual stress experience within a social context and involves the person's conception of both self and others. Burnout is a multi-layered concept characterized by various degrees of emotive exhaustion, depersonalization and a low sense of personal achievement. Burnout can weaken learners' specialized expansion, place patients at risk and donate to a series of personal concerns, including suicidal ideation and substance abuse (Dyrbye, 2008).

Personality traits are individual characteristics and traits that reliably distinguishes persons from each other in the ways they comprehend, act, feel and react and think with respect to a particular event or thing (Ones, et al., 2005). It has been established that attributes are an central threat for suicide, containing impulsivity, hostility, neuroticism, psychoticism, and gregariousness, are suggestively connected with suicidal ideation (Chen, et al .,2017).

Literature Review

Suicide is a major problem relating to mental health. In the west suicide is considered to be main cause of death and with the passage of time death toll because of suicide has increased in eastern countries also World Health Organization (WHO, 2012). In the countries where economic level is low the ratio of suicide and suicidal thoughts is far greater among medical students as compared to general population. Several studies shown that countries like Austria, Turkey, Pakistan and China, the rate of twelve months suicidal ideation and attempts among medical

students was 11.3% and 0.3%, 12% and 2.1%, 35.6% and 8.2% and 4.3% respectively (Osama, et al., 2014).

Studies have been conducted in the country and findings of the same may help us understand the dynamics of suicide. It will further help us in understanding the ratio of mortality among males and females. A study conducted in Karachi suggests that out of 100 suicides 83 were male and 17 were female, 24 percent suicide victims were married, 39 percent committers were unemployed and percentage for victims living in joint or extended family was 62 percent (Khan, et al., 2008).

Studies says that among adolescents around the world is main cause of death is suicide that is why this phase of life is comprised of age-related development, familial and traditional factors, hence this phase is critical. This result has also been affirmed by a research conducted in Pakistani college going people, where greater rates of suicidal ideation were indicated in both, females and males ranging 29.2% and 33.5 respectively. In Pakistan, expectations of parents from their parents are quite high and culturally also they bore in their minds that they are solely responsible for their tasks. In Pakistan it is highly regarded to submit before parents, consequently the family expectations, physical changes and demands of parents may lead the younger to stress and it increases when they take the situation as unbearable to strive and they want to quit it by taking their own lives as shown by literature (Yasien, et al., 2021).

Gilgit Baltistan is comprised of 10 Districts with an area of 27,479 square miles. Population of all ten districts is different with totally different dynamics. Before 1989 Ghizer was included in the area of District Gilgit (Khan, et al., 2009). According to the data collected in the last official census conducted in 1989, the total population of District Ghizer was 121,278 with an annual growth of 3.8% per annum out of which 52.45% of population was under the age of 15 years whereas 44.84% of the population was above 64 years of age. From 2000 to 2004, 49 females attempted successful suicide in Ghizer, which adds to an average of 9.8 suicides each year. Most of the women were married, whereas only 3 percent were separated. Average rough suicide rate becomes 14.89/100,000/year and if we bifurcate it further on the basis of age, it becomes 61.07 for 15-24 years, 49.38 for 35-34 years, 3.8 for 35-60 and 6.4 for above 60 years. On the other hand, rough rate for Peshawar is 0.43 per 100, 000/year starting from 1991 to 2000 and 2.86 for Rawalpindi in 2006 (Khan, et al., 2009).

Researchers also led a study in the same district, and as per their findings causes of female suicide include socio-cultural and psychological factors especially that of mental illnesses such as depression etc which normally led 19 percent of women to suicide in the region. Apart from this there are certain other factors which contribute a lot to this stigma which may include academic pressures, relationship issues, broken families, financial issues and many more., academic pressure, relational issues, divorce and financial restrictions became cause of 46 percent fatalities, while 35 percent committed self-injurious act due to personal freedom, plea for male child and decision making power (Sher & Dinar, 2015).

Understanding of personality traits is important to understand the suicidal behavior as personality traits play a vital role in this regard. For instance those having higher rates of traits of extraversion and neuroticism are found to have attempted more suicidal attempts. Studies have shown that there are negative impacts of burnout on the academic performance of students especially that of university students. It influences students in different ways like lower inherent inspiration, low grades in school, higher level of instable conducts and absenteeism and low educational objectives and commitment. Conduction of research studies in this field is also justified for the reason that there are certain mental problems connected with student burnout including despair and worried responses and dreads, social drawing, obstruction, aggression, tricky behaviors and suicidal ideation (Tomaszek, et al., 2020).

Burnout, depression and suicidal ideation are main areas of concern because of the consequences they can have on physician as well as the patients for whom they care (Schulte, et al., 2015). Individual thinking pattern is most important factor of suicide. Many studies have indicated that there is strong connection between suicidal behavior and personality traits (Calti, et al, 2008). Research have also established that hopelessness was connected with neuroticism grades and with low for conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and openness (Velting, 1999). Researches with respect to personality traits and characteristics imparting influence on feelings of suicide or attempts, show that factors like neuroticism, extraversion, innovation seeking and lower scales of harm dodging grab the most aptitudes in relative to feelings of suicide or suicidal behavior (Brezo, et al., 2006).

According to some studies greater scales of neuroticism were found to link with more negative work-home interaction, while extraversion linked to less negative run over between the two domains (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Neuroticism was positively linked with symptoms of

depression among American college students whereas conscientiousness and extraversion were negatively associated (Leow, et al., 2016).

There is a strong positive impact of Neuroticism on depression and was a strong forecaster trait for depression. Whereas impact of agreeableness and extraversion had strong negative impact on depression. Among Iranian university students there is found intermediating role of self-confidence and self-efficacy in association between the personality traits of big five model (Hosseini, et al., 2020).

Methodology

Correlational research strategy was used to conduct current research. The data was collected through Convenience sampling technique. The locale chosen for the research is Karakorum International University Gilgit, a famous place in the North of Pakistan. Targeted population was Karakorum International University Gilgit. The participants in this study were female students. Big Five Inventory (BFI), Maslach Burnout inventory and Beck scale for suicide ideation were used to measure the personality traits, neuroticism and openness, burnout and suicidal ideation respectively. Quantitative approaches were used to analyzed data. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS), version 21 for analyzing data for descriptive statistics respectively.

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Cronbach's Alpha of Personality Traits, Burnout and Suicidal Ideation (N=300)

Variables	K	A
Neuroticism	8	.90
Openness	10	.76
Occupational exhaustion	9	.91
Depersonalization	5	.62
Personal accomplishment	8	.76
Suicidal ideation	19	.80

Note: K=no of items, α =Reliability coefficient

Table 1 shows that all scales of the present study are internally consistent as alpha coefficients of all scales are above .70 except depersonalization having .62 which are in acceptable range.

Table 2

Correlation, Mean and Standard Deviation of Neuroticism, Openness, Occupational Exhaustion, Depersonalization, Personal Accomplishment and Suicidal Ideation (N=300)

Variables	Nu	Opens	OE	DP	PA	SI
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Neuroticism	~	-.06	-.03	-.02	-.00	.02
Openness	~	~	.10	.09	-.13*	.11*
Occupational Exhaustion	~	~	~	-.02	.05	.005
Depersonalization	~	~	~	~	.02	.04
Personal Accomplishment	~	~	~	~	~	.003
Suicidal Ideation	~	~	~	~	~	~
Mean	27.40	31.14	30.15	13.74	25.50	13.91
Standard Deviation	5.79	3.42	6.47	6.87	5.28	3.42

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, M=Mean, SD= Standard Deviation. Nu=Neuroticism,

Opens=Openness, OE=Occupational Exhaustion, DP=Depersonalization, Personal Accomplishments, SI=Suicidal Ideation.

Table 2 illustrates correlation of personality trait, burnout and suicidal ideation among female students of Karakoram International University Gilgit. Findings indicated that neuroticism have no correlation with personal accomplishment suicidal ideation and emotional exhaustion. Where openness shows significant positive relationship with suicidal ideation among university students. Results also shows that there is no any significant relationship between neuroticism and depersonalization and suicidal ideation. Result illustrates that there is no any significant relationship between emotional exhaustion burnout and suicidal ideation. Results also shows that there is no any relation between personal accomplishment and suicidal ideation

Table 3

Multiple Regression analysis of Neuroticism, Openness, Occupational Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment on suicidal ideation (N=300)

Variable	B	SE	β	t	P
Neuroticism	.01	.03	.03	.556	.57
Openness	.11	.06	.11	1.96	.05*
Occupational Exhaustion	-.03	.03	-.00	-.10	.91
Depersonalization	.01	.03	.03	.52	.60
Personal Accomplishment	.01	.03	.02	.36	.71

Note: SEB= stand for error of data.*<.05

Table 3 shows that neuroticism, openness, occupational exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. The R² value of .01 revealed that the predictors explained 01% variance in outcome variable with F (5,287) = 2.0, p >.05. Openness is a significant positive predictor of Suicidal Ideations (β = .11, p>.05) while Neuroticism, occupational exhaustion depersonalization and personal accomplishment are not significant predictors of suicidal ideation.

Table 4

Independent sample t- test of education on, neuroticism, openness, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, Personal accomplishment and Suicidal ideation (N=300)

Variables	Schooling				t	P	95% CI		Cohen's D
	BS		MS				LL	UL	
	M	SD	M	SD					
Neuroticism	26.86	2.41	28.00	7.93	1.68	.09	2.46	.19	0.19
Openness	31.18	3.18	31.10	3.66	22	.82	.69	.86	0.02
Emotional exhaustion	30.00	4.96	30.29	7.75	39	.69	1.76	1.18	0.04
Depersonalization	13.07	4.87	14.43	8.43	1.72	.08	2.92	1.93	0.10
Personal accomplishment	25.65	5.08	25.34	5.49	.51	.60	.88	1.51	0.05
Suicidal ideation	14.35	3.66	13.44	3.11	2.30	.02*	.13	1.67	0.26

Note: LL=Lower Limit, UL=Upper Limit

Table shows mean and standard deviation of neuroticism, openness, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, Personal accomplishment and Suicidal ideation. Result revealed that there is significant mean difference of education in Suicidal ideations. BS had high mean value than MS. Meanwhile results showed no significance mean difference on any other variables.

Table 5

Mean and Standard Deviation and One Way Analysis of Variance in Suicidal ideation Across Age (N=300)

Variables	Age						η^2	Post Hoc
	18-22		23-27		28 above			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Suicidal Ideations	13.62	3.01	13.85	3.67	14.30	3.55	.00	3>2>1

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, η^2 =Eta square

Table 5 shows mean, standard deviation and F values for suicidal ideation. Results indicated non-significant mean difference across age with $F(2,297) = .39, p > .05$.

Table 6

Mean and Standard Deviation and One Way Analysis of Variance in Suicidal ideation Across Area (N=300)

Variables	Area								η^2	Post Hoc
	Gilgit		Ghizer		Hunza/Nagar		Baltistan			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Suicidal Ideations	13.72	3.22	14.62	3.68	13.55	2.83	13.34	3.88	.01	2>3>1

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, η^2 =Eta square

Table 6 shows mean, standard deviation and F values for suicidal ideation. Results indicated none significant mean difference across area with $F(3,296) = 2.01, p > .05$.

Table 7

Mean and Standard Deviation and One Way Analysis of Variance in Suicidal ideation Across Residence (N=300)

Variables	Residence								η^2	Post Hoc
	University Hostel		Private hostel		Living with Relatives		Living With Family			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Suicidal Ideations	13.72	3.22	14.62	3.68	13.55	2.83	13.56	4.19	.01	1>2>3>4

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, η^2 =Eta square

Table 7 shows mean, standard deviation and F values for suicidal ideation. Results indicated non-significant mean difference across residence with $F(3,296) = 1.07, p > .05$.

Table 8

Mean and Standard Deviation and One Way Analysis of Variance in Suicidal ideation Across Family (N=300)

Variables	Family size								η^2	Post Hoc
	1-4		5-8		9-12		13-Above			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Suicidal Ideations	15.20	4.74	13.67	3.68	13.50	2.68	13.57	4.20	.03	2>3>1>4

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, η^2 =Eta square

Table 8 shows mean, standard deviation and F values for suicidal ideation. Results indicated significant mean difference across suicidal ideation with $F(3,296) = 3.56, p < .05$. Result revealed that mean difference of family size in which 1 to 4 members of family scored higher than other family size categories, which means that females from small family size were at high risk of suicidal ideation.

Table 9

Mean and Standard Deviation and One Way Analysis of Variance in Suicidal ideation Across Siblings (N=300)

Variables	Siblings								η^2	Post Hoc
	1-3		4-6		7-9		10-Above			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Suicidal Ideations	14.55	4.33	14.08	2.92	13.73	2.99	13.74	3.99	.01	3>2 >4>1

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, η^2 =Eta square

Table 9 shows mean, standard deviation and F values for suicidal ideation. Results indicated non-significant mean difference across suicidal ideation with $F(3,296) = 1.03, p > 0.05$.

Discussion

The present study was aimed to find relationship between Personality traits burnout and suicidal ideation. For this purpose female students of Karakorum International University which is located in Gilgit north of Pakistan was selected. The following chapter discusses in relevance with proceedings literature. Implications along with the limitations and recommendations were also discussed. Participant were briefed about the aim of the research and informed consent taken from the participants. Participants were ensured that their data will be kept confidential and only use for research purpose. Participants were given the authority to withdraw the research whenever they want. Data was collected physically from target population Karakorum International University Gilgit (KIU).

It was hypothesized that openness was negatively significant with suicidal ideation and positively significant correlated with personal accomplishment. Results of study revealed that openness was positively significant with suicidal ideation and negatively correlated with personal accomplishment. Some studies says that in a sample of elderly depressed patients, it was found and established that openness is associated and linked with suicidal ideation. One pretext the state of openness may aid to the growth of suicidal ideation within an individual, rather this may aid to the prevalence of indicating suicidal ideation as counted by self-report instruments. Furthermore, it has also been noted that remarkable levels of openness are connected to cognitive distortion, absence of acumen, and impulsivity which could also explain the connection with suicide. (Heisel, et al., 2006).

Such kind of people normally hold liberal political and social behaviors somehow which is unacceptable in such a conservative culture. Those who had greater scores in openness might be considered or labelled as a kind of persona producing maladaptive impulsive behavior, cognitive distortion, unsuccessful handling approaches and lack of insight, as established by a similar study to the one above referred, hence it becomes clear to a considerable extent that those who possess the important attribute of openness might be more inclined towards suicide or they might be the victims of suicidal ideation more as compared to the ones who are conservative and classical in mind (Piedmont, et al.,2012).

It was hypothesized that neuroticism was positively significant with occupational exhaustion, depersonalization and suicidal ideation but current study results showed that there was no significance correlation between neuroticism and suicidal ideation. Contradictory studies indicate that there is positive correlation between neuroticism and suicidal ideation. Neuroticism had a significant positive, and extraversion a significant negative link with depression. These two personality traits predict suicidal ideation among Iranian elderly people and both depression and neuroticism would make theoretical sense (Abbasi, et al., 2018). Another contradictory study revealed that students of lower grades find remarkable gages in neuroticism subscale having direct connection with suicidal ideation. The study established that connection between personality traits and suicidal ideation was entirely different in two sexes. It finds that suicidal ideation in women was positively connected with neuroticism and negatively with conscientiousness. Whereas in men it was expressively negatively connected with suicidal ideation (Velting, 1999).

Current study revealed that there was no correlation between occupational exhaustion, depersonalization and suicidal ideation. Contradictory studies indicate that burnout is a multi-layered concept characterized by various degrees of emotive exhaustion, depersonalization and low sense of personal achievement (Suleman, Khattak & Husain, 2021). Burnout can weaken learners' specialized expansion, place patients at risk and donate to a series of personal concerns, including suicidal ideation (Dyrbye, 2008).

It was hypothesized that there would be significant relationship between demographic variables and key variables. Meanwhile results showed no significance mean difference on any other variables and was no co relation among demographic variables and suicidal ideation except number of family members and schooling. Result revealed that there is significant mean difference of education in suicidal ideations, BS had high mean value than MS. Similar studies says that the existence of suicidal ideation in BS students was higher than MS/MA students (Galan,et al.,2014). Mean difference of family size in which 1 to 4 members of family scored higher than other family size categories, which means that females from small family size were at high risk of suicidal ideation. Similar studies state that the psychological growth of family elements is possible when the family members are connected with each other and established emotional link between each other. As separation and autonomy are basic task both for the adolescents and parents. If family members are not adopted or fail to established family bonding, this may lead adults towards suicide (Abaid, et al., 2010).

It was hypothesized that there would be positive correlation between personal accomplishment and openness. Current there was positive correlation between personal accomplishment and openness. Contradictory study said that openness person is very friendly and cooperative and positively correlated with personal accomplishment (Barrett, et al., 2016). Perhaps cultural factors, male dominated society, patriarchal beliefs, and religious misguidance and paly role in suicidal ideation in female students of Karakorum international University. As previous research carried with respect to association between personality traits and suicidality has been questioned with the objection of significant co-variables such as the existence of mental health issues or certain sociocultural patterns responsible to influence self-harm (Brezo, et al., 2006). Another research conducted in Pakistan aiming at investigating the associated factors of suicidal ideation in college students reveals that, however these factors are normally prejudiced by culture, rationally studies conducted in western culture, perhaps may not describe exact scene with respect to suicidal ratio and linked factors prevailing in eastern culture like Pakistan (Yasien, et al., 2021). Feelings of guilt, symptoms of depression, anxiety and psychological depression can be effective factors that may lead youngsters to attempt suicide as way out. (Haliburn, 2000).

Suicidal ideation may be related to culture, hence the same requires for investigation and research over the world to comprehend and determine that how culture may influence suicide, and the same can help to settle the increasing rate of suicide, as the culture in itself can provide handling mechanism (Heisel, et al, 2006). Among women some 3% of the cases were stated for trying to harm self as a result of the following three chief factors as established by the studies. The factors are, deprivation, dissatisfied with their life and being unable to meet the basic necessities of their lives (Sher& Dinar, 2015). In the vicinity of Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan suicide has been a burning issue especially for youngsters. Youngsters of Gilgit-Baltistan, especially of age 14 to 18 are highly prone to the suicide. More than 300 cases of suicide were recorded in diverse police stations of district Ghizer of Gilgit-baltistan only during the period from 1996 to 2010, but it is believed that the above given rate/figure may be high for the reason that many cases are not being reported even owing to certain traditional factors, internal issues and family threats (Times, 2014).

With respect to Gilgit-Baltistan particularly the problem is quite different as the modernity here in the minds of people has taken place but contrary to the minds of people there is no space available for this genre in the society to penetrate easily, hence the freedom pertaining

to modernity could not be celebrated accordingly. It is not deep rooted yet it Gilgit-Baltistan, rather it is in hybrid form which ultimately has given birth to a paradoxical situation where there remains no or very limited space for growing modernization directed to vanishing of all factors. The position is further worsen by the disappearance of all the spaces for women. Concluding the discourse, it may be rightly said that minds of people are free from all kinds of traditional clutches but there is no space available in the society for the penetration of this free mind (Dad, 2014). This very critical issue of suicide is not confined to district Ghizer only rather it is prevalent in other districts of Gilgit-Baltistan also which again establishes the fact that this is yet another consequence of era farced by the society as a result of abrupt diffusion of modernization (Dad, 2014).

Conclusion

The study revealed that there was no significant co relation between neuroticism, and suicidal ideation.it also revealed that there was no co relation between occupational exhaustion, depersonalization and suicidal ideation. Where openness was positively significant with suicidal ideation.

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