SUICIDE PHENOMENON IN THE MODERN SOCIETY

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Abstract. *Suicide is a global problem that is caused by a lot of factors, such as demographic, age, gender factores, and, therefore, is hard to reduce its rate quickly, it is a long way process. Being a social problem, it influences community – not only people with suicidal thoughts suffer, but also humans around them. Our main goal is raise awareness on contribution with every effort on prevention of suicides and, after that, to intervene in order to help when needed.*

Keywords*: mental disorder, stigma, healthcare, communication, hotlines.*

Introduction

Suicide is a serious issue that continues to plague society. It is a deep-rooted problem that can have devastating effects on individuals and their loved ones. This article will explore the causes and effects of suicide, and discuss how we can better understand and address this issue in our society. We will discuss how people come to the decision to take their own lives, the warning signs to look out for, and the steps that can be taken to prevent suicide. This article will explore the various types of suicide, the risk factors associated with suicide, and the strategies used to prevent suicide. It will also discuss the social, economic, and emotional impacts of suicide on individuals, families, and communities. With a better understanding of the issue, we can work together to reduce the number of people who are affected by suicide. Finally, we, as authors, want to make sure that this topic would be no more in the shadows and will be discussed and fully debated.

Social complexity and suicide

First of all, when it comes to the term of „suicide", a lot of people think of it as a diagnosis or a mental problem that leads to it. However, in terms of reality, the „suicide" is a phenomenon as Émile Durkheim stated in his book [1]. It is said that suicide is more a social phenomenon that is shaped by the characteristics of the society in which it occurs. He identified several different types of suicide, including egoistic, altruistic, and anomic suicide, each of which is associated with different social conditions. As an example the egoistic one, is associated with a lack of social integration or connection. In highly individualistic societies, where people are less connected to each other, the risk of egoistic suicide may or can be higher.

Durkheim's work suggests that social complexity can have both positive and negative effects on suicide rates. On the one hand, highly complex societies may offer more opportunities for social integration and connection, which can help to reduce the risk of egoistic suicide. On the other hand, the fast-paced and rapidly changing nature of complex societies may lead to a breakdown in social norms and values, increasing the risk of anomic suicide. Respectively, it can be said that the society, its norms, individuality and rules are the main things that can alter the rates of suicide. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that the suicide phenomenon is not about one single individuum, but a whole society. That is why, suicide is considered as an unstable phenomemon that cannot be so easily resolved or avoided.

Global and National suicide levels

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) [2], an estimated 1 million people die by suicide each year, or about one death by suicide every 40 seconds. Suicide is a global phenomenon and occurs in all regions of the world. The global suicide rate is estimated to be 10.7 suicides per 100,000 people (Fig. 1).
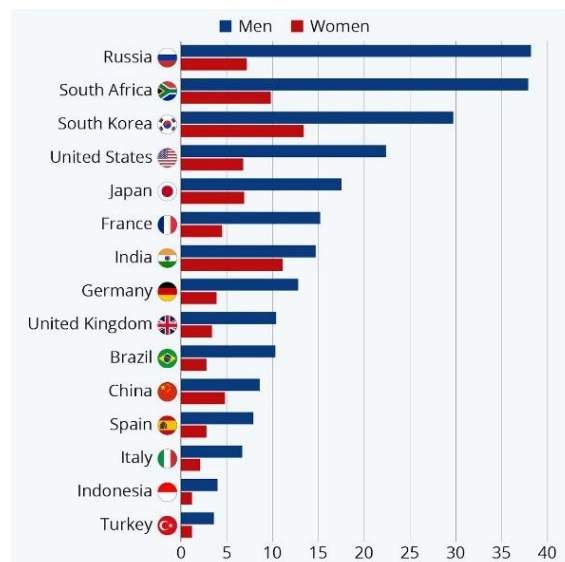
Figure 1. Suicide Rates Around the World [2]

It is important to note that these estimates may be underestimated, as stigma and social taboo surrounding suicide can lead to underreporting. Addressing suicide at a global level requires a comprehensive approach that involves multiple sectors and stakeholders, including governments, healthcare providers, schools, communities, and individuals. This can include improving access to mental health services, reducing the stigma associated with mental illness, promoting healthy relationships and supportive environments, and implementing effective suicide prevention strategies.
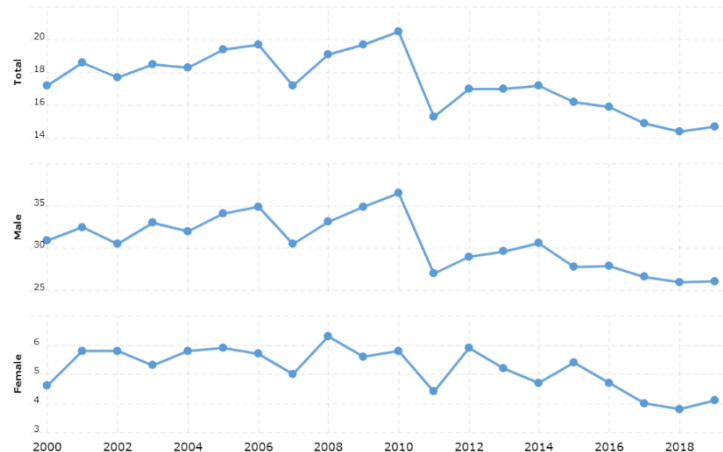

Figure 2. Rate of suicides in Republic of Moldova [3]

Speaking about our country, the statistics are not so good as around the world. Because of the environment and other economical and political factors (Eastern country), suicide rates in R. of Moldova are high enough to place the country in the first 50 among the world [3]. As we see, suicide rates happily have been decreasing, however they are big enough to rank Moldova as it was said in the top 50 countries with the most high suicide rate (Fig. 2).

Causes of suicide
There are several of causes of suicide that are spread among
Mental health disorders:
One of the main causes of suicide rate increasing are mental health disorders that have been largely spreading and appearing on a lot of people from around the world. These conditions can range from mild to severe and can have a profound impact on an individual's daily life. Unfortunately, some individuals suffering from mental health disorders may turn to suicide as a means of escape or as a mean to avoid the pain inside their souls. People with these disorders may experience feelings of

hopelessness, helplessness, and worthlessness that can lead them to consider suicide or self-harm [4]. As an example of such disorders are depression that reflects the sadness, loss of interest and decreased energy levels, or bipolar disorder that can lead to alternating periods of mania and depression. Often, we can misinterpret the state of bipolarity with a "moody" person because they often change their mood. There also a lot of mental issues that can cause the state of depression and anxiety, but the most important thing is to prevent people with such issues from substance abuse.

Substance abuse:

Substance abuse is a major concern among teens and adults, and it can have serious consequences for their physical and mental health. Research has shown that there is a strong link between substance abuse and mental health disorders in teens. In fact, many teens and adults who struggle with substance abuse also struggle with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder. The thinking of these people can be different but their interpret drugs and alcohol as a remedy for "broken heart" or other personal problems. This is the result of mediatization , or TV shows and media influencing teens to smoke or do drugs because in "that" movie the main character is smoking when he is "depressed" [5]. However, often, it works as a opposite. When adults or teens are using drugs or alcohol, it can worsen their mental health symptoms and increase the risk of developing a co-occurring mental health disorder. Substance abuse can also lead to a decline in overall functioning and well-being, and can interfere with important aspects of life such as school, family, and relationships. Substance abuse can also lead to suicide because of the risk of developing a dependence. As it is said, the substance abuse can lead to worsening of the mental health, therefore, it can lead to dramatic events.

Traumas:

All of these problems and events are often caused by emotional traumas that happened to the individual in the past, because of his or her parents, or because of some traumatic events. These traumatic events, such as physical or sexual abuse, natural disasters, or the loss of a loved one, can have a profound impact on an individual's mental health. When combined with pre-existing mental health disorders, such as depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic events can increase the risk of suicide (again). They may also experience intense anxiety and fear, as well as intrusive thoughts and memories related to the traumatic event. These symptoms can make it difficult for individuals to function in daily life and can lead to a decline in overall well-being.

What are events can provoke traumas and mental health disorders?

Physical or sexual abuse: Physical or sexual abuse can result in physical injuries and psychological scars. Individuals who have experienced abuse may develop mental health disorders such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety.

Natural disasters: Natural disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and wildfires, can cause significant physical and emotional trauma. Individuals who have experienced natural disasters may struggle with PTSD, depression, and anxiety.

Combat exposure: Combat exposure is a common cause of trauma among military personnel. Individuals who have been in combat may experience PTSD, depression, and anxiety as a result of their experiences.

The loss of a loved one: The loss of a loved one, whether through death, divorce, or separation, can be traumatic. Individuals who have experienced the loss of a loved one may struggle with grief and depression.

Childhood trauma: Childhood trauma, such as neglect, abuse, or household dysfunction, can have a lasting impact on an individual's mental health. Individuals who have experienced childhood trauma may be at increased risk for developing mental health disorders such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety.

Information took from [6]. These traumas can lead to severe problems and issues with mental health as it is said. As it was said, traumas can also lead to suicide because of their impact on the individuum mental health. However, the most cases of suicide nowadays are influenced and are directly dependent by the stigma surrounding mental health.

Stigma surrounding mental health

The stigma surrounding mental health refers to negative attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes that exist in society about mental health conditions and the individuals who experience them. This stigma can result in discrimination, social isolation, and shame for those who are affected by mental health issues, and can prevent them from seeking help and support. One of the reasons for the existence of stigma around mental health is a lack of education and understanding about mental health conditions. Many people misunderstand the causes of mental health issues and believe that they are a result of personal weakness, rather than recognizing that they are often caused by a complex combination of genetic, environmental, and life experiences. Additionally, media representation of mental health conditions often perpetuates stereotypes and reinforces the stigma, leading to further misunderstandings and discrimination. This can result in people with mental health issues being treated unfairly in the workplace, school, or even in their personal relationships. This stigma can lead to a lot of cases of self-harm and self-destructiveness [7].

Risk factors that affect suicide rates over time

Suicide rates can vary over time due to a range of factors, including economic, political, and social factors. Understanding these factors can help in developing effective interventions to prevent suicide and reduce its impact on individuals, families, and communities. Economic factors can play a significant role in shaping suicide rates. During economic recessions, for example, suicide rates have been shown to increase as a result of financial stress and job loss. According to a study published in the Journal of Affective Disorders, the 2008 financial crisis was associated with an increase in suicide rates in several countries, including the United States, Japan, and Spain [8]. Similarly, the Great Depression of the 1930s was also associated with increased suicide rates. In addition to economic factors, political factors can also impact suicide rates. For example, conflict and war can lead to increased rates of suicide, as individuals may experience high levels of stress and trauma as a result of their experiences. Similarly, changes in political regimes and systems can also lead to increased levels of stress and uncertainty, which can increase the risk of suicide. Social factors can also play a role in shaping suicide rates. For example, social isolation and loneliness can increase the risk of suicide, as individuals may feel disconnected from their communities and lack a sense of purpose or belonging. In addition, access to lethal means, such as firearms or drugs, can also increase the risk of suicide, as individuals may be more likely to act on suicidal thoughts if they have easy access to these means.

Demographic factors [9]*:*

Age:

Children (age 10-14): In the United States, the suicide rate among children aged 10-14 is relatively low, but it has been increasing in recent years. In 2019, the suicide rate for this age group was 1.5 per 100,000.

Adolescents (age 15-19): Adolescents have a higher suicide rate than children, but it is still lower than that of adults. In 2019, the suicide rate for this age group was 11.8 per 100,000.

Young adults (age 20-24): The suicide rate among young adults is the highest of any age group. In 2019, the suicide rate for this age group was 17.0 per 100,000.

Adults (age 25 and older): The suicide rate decreases with age for adults. In 2019, the suicide rate for adults aged 25-34 was 16.9 per 100,000, while the rate for those aged 35-44 was 12.5 per 100,000.

Gender:

Sadly, but gender and suicide are dependent. Suicide rate of men can reach to 6:1 in comparison with suicide rate of women in Eastern countries. If we are speaking about all the countries, there is the same: men are more likely to commit suicide that women, even though researches shown that women are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. So why men are so suicidal?

One possible explanation for this difference is that men are more likely to use lethal methods when attempting suicide [10]. For example, men are more likely to use firearms, which have a higher fatality rate than other methods such as poisoning or cutting. In contrast, women are more likely to

use less lethal methods, such as overdose, which may increase the chances of survival. Another factor that may contribute to the higher suicide rate among men is the stigma surrounding mental health issues [10-11]. Men are often socialized to be stoic and self-reliant, which can make it difficult for them to seek help when they are struggling with mental health problems. In addition, men may be less likely to disclose their feelings to others or to seek professional help, which can lead to feelings of isolation and hopelessness. Other risk factors for suicide that may disproportionately affect men include substance abuse, unemployment, financial stress, and relationship breakdowns. Men may also be less likely to have strong social support networks or to engage in activities that promote emotional wellbeing, such as exercise or hobbies.

Geographic Location:

There are a number of factors that can influence the suicide rate in a given area, including access to mental health resources, cultural attitudes towards mental health, and individual and community stressors. In general, it is thought that suicide rates may be higher in rural areas due to a number of factors, including a higher prevalence of certain risk factors, such as limited access to mental health care, social isolation, and high rates of firearms ownership.

Impact on Families and Communities

The impact of suicide on families can be significant and far-reaching. The loss of a loved one to suicide can cause a range of emotions, such as grief, anger, guilt or shame. Family members may also experience feelings of confusion, shock and disbelief, and may struggle to understand why their loved one chose to take their own life. This can have a lasting impact on mental health of family members and close friends, and can lead to ongoing psychological distress. In addition to the emotional impact, suicide can also have significant financial and practical impacts on families. For example, families may need to take time off work to cope with the aftermath of the suicide, which can lead to lost income and increased financial strain. They may also need to pay for funeral expenses and other related costs, which can add to their financial burden. The impact of suicide on communities can also be substantial. The loss of a member of a community lead to decreased social cohesion and a sense of loss and isolation [12]. Additionally, the impact of suicide can ripple through communities, leading to increased rates of substance abuse, depression, and other mental health problems. In some cases, suicide can even lead to copycat suicides, as those who are struggling with mental health issues may be influenced by the suicide of someone they know or admire. The reduce the impact of suicide on families and communities, it is important to understand the underlying causes of suicide and to develop effective interventions to prevent suicide attempts and deaths. This may involve addressing risk factors such as mental health conditions, access to lethal means, and social and environmental stressors. It may also involve providing support to individuals who are struggling with suicidal thoughts, and promoting access to mental health services for those who need it. In addition to these preventive measures, it is also important to support families and communities who have been affected by suicide. This may involve providing grief counseling and support groups, as well as financial and practical support to help families manage the aftermath of a suicide. Suicide is a major public health concern with a significant impact on families and communities. To reduce the impact of suicide, it is essential to understand its causes and to develop effective interventions to prevent suicide attempts and deaths.

Prevention measures

Preventative measures to reduce the risk of suicide can be divided into two categories: primary and secondary prevention. Primary prevention focuses on reducing the overall incidence of suicide by addressing the underlying risk factors. This can include addressing access to lethal means, promoting mental health and well-being, and increasing public awareness about the warning signs of suicide. Secondary prevention efforts are aimed at early identification and intervention for individuals at risk of suicide. This can include screening and assessment tools in health care settings, as well as training programs for teachers, police officers, and other professionals who may come into contact with individuals at risk. In addition, community-based programs and public health campaigns can

also play a crucial role in suicide prevention. For example, promoting healthy coping mechanisms and reducing stigma around mental health can encourage individuals to seek help when they need it. The development of safe and supportive environments, such as schools and workplaces, can also help to create a culture of support and reduce the risk of suicide. Also, another prevention method is communication. Basically, people are social creatures, they are made to live and cooperate with other people, therefore, it can decrease mental fall deeper and deeper. People tend to overthink things where they are left alone with their own thoughts. People have to be able to express their feelings easily, without being judged, as it usually happens specifically for boys, that are taught that they don't have to cry, they have to be masculine and to not show their emotions [12]. The access to different hotlines is essential thing for this specific problem. Those lines are at the border between prevention and intervention, because can be used in both steps. People don't really get the thing that those lines are guided by professionals and they can help you whenever you need [13].

Intervention measures

Interventional strategies for suicide include a wide range of treatments, such as individual and group therapy, medication-based treatments, and crisis intervention services. One of the most effective therapies for reducing the risk of suicide is cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) [13], which can help individuals to identify and challenge negative thoughts and behaviors that contribute to suicidal ideation. Other evidence-based treatments include dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) [13], which focuses on improving emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships, and problem-solving therapy, which helps individuals to find practical solutions to the challenges they face. In addition to therapeutic treatments, peer support and crisis hotlines can provide critical support and resources to individuals in crisis. Having access to these resources can be life-saving for individuals who are struggling with suicidal thoughts or behaviors. It is also important to have post-intervention support, such as follow-up appointments and community resources, to help individuals maintain their progress and continue to recover. Effective suicide prevention and intervention requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses the underlying risk factors and provides accessible and effective treatments and support to those in need. With a continued commitment to reducing the incidence of suicide and improving mental health, it is possible to create a safer and more supportive world for all.

Conclusions

To reduce suicide rates, it is important to understand the factors that contribute to suicide and to develop effective interventions to address these factors. This may involve addressing economic stress, such as by providing financial support to those who are struggling financially, or reducing access to lethal means, such as by implementing safe storage laws for firearms. In addition, it may involve promoting social connectedness and reducing social isolation, such as by providing support and resources for individuals who are struggling with mental health issues. It's important to note that suicide is a complex issue, and there is no single cause or explanation for why someone may choose to take their own life.

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