
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SUICIDE IDEATION AND ATTEMPTS AMONG SECONDARY STUDENTS IN MURANGA COUNTY, KENYA

UMA ANÁLISE CRÍTICA DAS DIFERENÇAS DE GÊNERO NA IDEACÃO E TENTATIVAS DE SUICÍDIO ENTRE ESTUDANTES SECUNDÁRIOS NO CONDADO DE MURANGA, QUÊNIA

Anne Muiru
School of Business and Education,
Kirinyaga University, Kenya
amuiru@kyu.ac.ke

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Abstract: The contemporary society is characterized by several problems among students in the secondary schools. Some may be psychosocial leading to suicide ideation and attempts. This study sought to assess the psychosocial factors in public secondary schools in Murang'a County. The objectives of the study were to explore the gender differences on suicide ideation and attempts among learners in public secondary school students in Murang'a County, Kenya. This study was guided by the psychosocial theory by Eric Erickson, Interpersonal theory by Thomas Jioner and Psychological theory by Edwin Scheidman. This was a mixed methodology study, whose design was survey and ex- posto facto for quantitative research while phenomenology was for qualitative research for the purpose of data triangulation. The target population comprised of the 5940 students, 116 Guidance and Counseling teachers, 289 class teachers and 8 sub county educational officers, parents and suicide attempters. Overall, the sampled respondents were 642 covering all the categories of the study comprising 560 students using cluster sampling, suicide attempters and parents using snowballing, 56 class teachers, 8 sub county educational officers and 28 Guidance and Counseling teachers were sampled using purposive sampling. The data collection instruments comprised of questionnaires for the students, interview guide for Guidance and Counseling teachers, Sub County Educational Officers, interview guide for parents and suicide attempters and focused group discussions for the teachers. The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis for qualitative data while quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics like frequency tables and the regression model. The findings established and concluded that personality traits, family history, school set-up and society setting had significant contribution to the frequency of suicide ideation and attempts in Murang'a County, Kenya. The study established that while girls attempt suicide more, it is the boys who die more since they use lethal means. The study recommended the empowerment of the students both boys and girls on positive self-esteem and confidence by the teachers, the use of various psychological therapies to deal with personality disorders by the guidance and counseling teachers.

Keywords: Gender Differences. Suicide. Suicide ideation. Suicide attempts.

Resumo: A sociedade contemporânea é caracterizada por vários problemas entre os alunos das escolas secundárias. Alguns podem ser psicossociais que levam a ideações e tentativas de suicídio. Este estudo procurou avaliar os fatores psicossociais nas escolas secundárias públicas do Condado de Murang'a. Os

objetivos do estudo eram explorar as diferenças de gênero na ideação e tentativas de suicídio entre alunos de escolas secundárias públicas do condado de Murang'a, Quênia. Este estudo foi orientado pela teoria psicossocial de Eric Erickson, pela teoria interpessoal de Thomas Jioner e pela teoria psicológica de Edwin Scheidman. Este foi um estudo de metodologia mista, cujo desenho era de pesquisa quantitativa e ex post facto, enquanto a fenomenologia era de pesquisa qualitativa para fins de triangulação de dados. A população alvo era composta de 5940 alunos, 116 professores de Orientação e Aconselhamento, 289 professores de classe e 8 funcionários de educação do sub-condado, pais e tentativas de suicídio. No total, os entrevistados amostrados foram 642, cobrindo todas as categorias do estudo, compreendendo 560 alunos usando amostragem de grupo, tentativas de suicídio e pais usando bola de neve, 56 professores de classe, 8 diretores educacionais do sub condado e 28 professores de Orientação e Aconselhamento foram amostrados usando amostragem proposital. Os instrumentos de coleta de dados compreendiam questionários para os alunos, guia de entrevistas para os professores de Orientação e Aconselhamento, oficiais educacionais do sub condado, guia de entrevistas para pais e tentativas de suicídio e discussões de grupo focalizadas para os professores. Os dados coletados foram analisados usando análise temática para dados qualitativos enquanto os dados quantitativos foram analisados usando estatísticas descritivas e inferenciais como tabelas de frequência e o modelo de regressão. Os resultados estabeleceram e concluíram que os traços de personalidade, história da família, estrutura escolar e ambiente social tiveram contribuição significativa para a frequência de tentativas e ideações suicidas no condado de Murang'a, Quênia. O estudo estabeleceu que enquanto as meninas tentam mais o suicídio, são os meninos que morrem mais, uma vez que usam meios letais. O estudo recomendou a capacitação dos estudantes, tanto de meninos quanto de meninas, sobre a auto-estima positiva e a confiança dos professores, o uso de várias terapias psicológicas para lidar com distúrbios de personalidade por parte dos professores de orientação e aconselhamento.

Palavras-chave: Diferenças de gênero. Suicídio. Ideação de suicídio. Tentativas de suicídio.

Introduction

According to the Standard Digital, a first study detailing incidence of suicide in Africa, estimates that about 3,000 Kenyans in every 100,000 commit or attempt to take their own lives. Kenya comes 65th out of 192 countries according to the World Health Rankings on suicide prevalence. The report says that although more women than men in Kenya attempt suicide, most of these attempts do not succeed. While there are no official figures on the prevalence of youth suicide in Kenya, a 2018 study by the Centre for the Study of Adolescence indicated that 6.8 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men in Kenya had attempted suicide at least once in their lives.

Reports of persons who have committed suicide in Kenya are alarming and not curved to specific age group (CIA, 2017). The dynamic psycho-social environments and the attendant challenges point to the possibility of a dramatic increase in suicidal behaviour in the coming decade. This is likely to be based on the perceived lifestyles, behavioural patterns, and economic

wellbeing and in some instances psychological considerations. However, whether successful or unsuccessful, suicide affects people directly or indirectly and it is estimated that each suicide leaves an average of 6 people intimately affected by the death either as a spouse, parent, significant other or sibling (Staff, 2018). It is also estimated that 80 per cent of the home suicide scenes are cleaned up by a close friend, significant other or a family member and that 75% are likely to commit suicide later on in life (Staff, 2018). Several predisposing factors have been identified for the rising suicide incidences among Kenyan youth. Depression, mental illness, drugs and alcohol abuse, strained relationships, inadequate parenting, poverty, abuse, trauma, domestic violence, broken homes and chronic diseases. If we want to help prevent our young people from taking their lives it is important to recognize the warning signs and risk factors of suicide and know what to do if you want to help prevent tragedy. In Kenya, with the current slow growth of our economy, employment is hard to come by. Frustrations about money and jobs can lead to depression, drug abuse and alcohol addiction. When the young people feel inadequate and powerless they may be tempted to commit suicide.

A report by Njujo (2019) on 17th February 2019 (CIA), asserted that the Kenyan society had lately been rocked by a wave of young people committing suicide. This was now causing concern among some quarters, especially those that deal with crime management. He stated that in the year 2017, after the announcement of the Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination results, there was excitement in many families. Media in Kenya exhaustively covered the high achievers and kind of swept under the carpet the under performers. Counties that had performed poorly were ranked and printed and that generated some debate in the respective counties, but it soon died down. Sometimes the education system in Kenya can be blamed for the problem. The problem began around 1997-1998 when the start of large-scale cheating and exam leakage became a big concern. The leakage came as a result of high competition for the higher grades among Academy private schools. In Kenya, suicide is a criminal act punishable by imprisonment, according to the Penal Code 226 "Any person who attempts to kill himself is guilty of a misdemeanor." Since no penalty is given there, the penalty is up to two years in prison or a fine, or both (Section 36). This would certainly deter those affected from presenting for assessment or treatment, making it difficult to establish the nature, extent or correlates of suicidal behavior in the community. For children and adolescents, who make up almost half of the population of

Kenya, there are no records or data looking specifically at their patterns of suicidal ideation or behaviour, or on the number of lives lost to completed suicide.

Statement of the Problem

Suicide ideation and attempts were and are now on the increase among secondary school students. The cause of this phenomenon was not clearly known. The extent to which psychosocial factors contribute to the prevalence of suicide ideation and attempts in Murang'a County had not yet been established. This prompted a critical assessment of the personality traits, family history, school set up, society setting and gender differences and their influence to suicide ideation and attempts among public secondary schools in Murang'a County. The study therefore sought to assess the extent to which psychosocial factors related to the prevalence of suicide ideation and attempts with a special focus on Murang'a County.

Objective of the Study

To establish the gender differences in suicidal ideation and attempts in public secondary schools in Murang'a County.

Literature Review

Suicide affects all youth, but some groups are at higher risk than others. Boys are more likely than girls to die from suicide. Of the reported suicides in the 10 to 24 age group, 81% of the deaths were males and 19% were females. Girls, however, are more likely to report attempting suicide than boys. The age profile is important in determining who is at great risk of ideating and attempting suicide. The respondents with 15 years and below accounted for 23%, those with 16, 17 and 18 years accounted for 29%, 26% and 17 % respectively and those above 18 years accounted for 6% (CDC, 2018). The age of 16-18 years shows the highest percentage which implies that this is the period of turmoil, growth spurt academic pressure, higher generation gap and confusion all which can increase suicidal ideation and attempts.

Epstein and Spirito (2017) examined gender differences in risk factors associated with suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. The major risk factors examined were substance use, aggression and victimization, and risky sexual behavior using data from the 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance. The results of the study demonstrated both gender-specific and gender-

neutral risk factors for various risk factors of suicidality in a nationally representative sample of high school students in the U.S. Smoking cigarettes daily in the past 30 days increased the odds of considering suicide in girls. Early onset drinking was associated with considering suicide and planning a suicide attempt for girls only, while it was a risk factor for both males and females for suicide attempts. Other drug use (sniffing glue, injecting drugs) showed associations with all types of suicidality across gender. Carrying a weapon and fighting (in school for boys and outside of school for girls) were consistently related to suicidal ideation and attempts. In addition, having had sex before age 13 was related to making a plan to attempt suicide and actually attempting suicide across gender (Epstein & Spirito, 2017).

Females tend to show higher rates of reported nonfatal suicidal behavior, while males have a much higher rate of completed suicide (Canetto, 2018). A 2018 study of suicide attempts by gender found that females have a higher rate of attempted suicide than males earlier in life, which decreases with age, (Moller, 2018). For males the rate of attempted suicide remains fairly constant when controlled for age. Males and females also tend to differ in their methods of suicide and responses to suicidal feelings. Many researchers have attempted to find explanations for why gender is such a significant indicator for suicide. One common explanation relies on the social constructions of hegemonic masculinity and femininity.

In a review of the literature on gender and suicide, male suicide rates were explained in terms of traditional gender roles. Male gender roles tend to emphasize greater levels of strength, independence, and risk-taking behavior (Lanley, 2017). Reinforcement of this gender role often prevents males from seeking help for suicidal feelings and depression (Payne, 2017). Prior research has revealed marked gender differences in adolescent suicidal ideation and behavior. While female subjects outnumber male subjects in most community studies of suicidal ideation and attempts (Groleger, 2018) some studies have reported that adolescent boys are overrepresented in studies of completed suicide (McGee, 2017).

Theoretical Literature

Psychosocial Theory by Erick Erickson

Erik Erikson (1902-1994) maintained that children develop in a predetermined order. Instead of focusing on cognitive development, however, he was interested in how children

socialize and how this affects their sense of self among the boys and girls. Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development has eight distinct stages, each with two possible outcomes. According to the theory, successful completion of each stage results in a healthy personality and successful interactions with others. Failure to successfully complete a stage can result in a reduced ability to complete further stages and therefore an unhealthier personality and sense of self. These stages, however, can be resolved successfully at a later time.

Erickson (1961) posited that the child's psychosocial development provides a framework for analyzing some of the issue's students encounter at school and at home that can increase suicide attempts. The main emphasis of this theory is on the influence of psychosocial factors on stages of ego development. Each stage is a building block for the next stage. If any stage is not properly mastered, then maladjustments in behavior that can lead to suicide may occur within the individual.

During the early stage of development, the child relies completely on an adult who is usually the mother for the satisfaction of his or her needs. If these needs (food, warmth, comfort and love) are met, the child develops trust in this mother-figure, which is later generalized to basic trust of others. On the other hand, if these needs are not met or if they are delayed or in short supply, then there is basic mistrust. Mistrust is expressed in suspicion, anxiety and withdrawal from others. Mothers who are too busy may not meet these needs. Mistrust is later reinforced by their perception of hostile school environment that can lead to suicide attempts (Erickson, 1961).

Harsh parental interferences affect the child's attempts to become independent. Harshness is likely to disrupt the child's autonomy and may produce feelings of shame and doubt associated with low achievement motivation which may affect the child's personality traits leading to lack of confidence and low self-esteem. Students who might find school life frustrating may retreat into fantasy rather than engaging in problem solving activities. In most cases, they are pushed to the limit under conditions of threat to learn things that are meaningless in terms of their goals, purposes and therefore become incompatible with their homes and the communities which can make them have suicidal ideations. Failure to perform well in school makes them to be frustrated, withdrawn and depressed which can increase suicide attempts (Erickson, 1961).

Peer pressure is also a strong factor that is likely to influence the children in their search for identity and can affect the boys and girls differently. They are likely to form defiant gangs that oppose school authority and parents. Increased frustrations and stresses in life make them feel worthless, isolated which can increase the suicide attempts (Erickson, 1961).

Methodology

In achieving the objective of the study, the researcher used the mixed research methodology which is an approach of inquiry that combines both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involved the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). To collect quantitative data, the researcher used questionnaires from the students while for qualitative data, the researcher used interview guides from the Sub educational officers and guidance and counseling and focus group discussions with the class teachers. Qualitative technique aimed to explore the human elements of suicide while examining how individuals saw and experienced it. It was used to explore new phenomena of suicide and to capture individual thoughts, feelings or interpretation of meaning and process. The context of enquiry was not be contrived, they were natural, and nothing be pre-defined or taken for granted (Christina, 2005).

Research design

Qualitative design employed in this study was phenomenology. The approach allowed the researcher to carry out an in-depth focus on the meaning of suicidal ideation and attempts in the area of study. It was also used to explore the phenomena of suicide and to capture individual thoughts, feelings, experiences or interpretation of meaning and process. The researcher had a prolonged period of time with the informants in order to build trust. The researcher was able to gather data on how psychosocial factors may contribute to suicide ideation and attempts.

Quantitative research design combined the Survey and Ex-post facto research designs. The researcher used the survey research design to collect information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions. Survey research design proved to be an efficient method for systematically collecting data from the sample on personality traits, school set up and gender differences on suicide ideation and attempts.

Ex post facto research design was used in this study. This research design is appropriate in situations where it is not possible or acceptable to manipulate the characteristics of human participants (Cohen, Manion & Morison, 2000). The researcher collected data from sub county education officers, records from the school administrators and guidance and counseling teachers. This design was appropriate because the psychosocial factors that had influenced the students on suicide ideation and attempts had already occurred.

Target population

The target population was 29 public secondary schools in Mathioya Sub County as indicated in the appendices ix. It comprised of 5940 students, 289 secondary school teachers, and 116 Guidance & Counselling teachers, eight District Education Officers, suicide attempters and parents. The target population is well summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Target Population in Secondary Schools in Mathioya Sub County

Population variables	Number
Total student population	5940
Number of Guidance & Counseling teachers	116
No of Division sub county Education Officers	8
Number of class teachers	289
Total	6353

Source: Murang'a County Office

Sampling procedures and techniques

For the qualitative data, the researcher used snowball sampling to identify suicide attempters. The researcher selected suicide attempters with the help of Sub County Educational Officers, teachers and through a network of other earlier selected students suicide attempters. Through the same procedure, parents of suicide attempters were selected. The success of this technique depended greatly on the initial contacts and connections. The researcher also interviewed Guidance & Counselling teachers, class teachers and Sub County Education Officers' respondents using purposive sampling.

On the other hand, for quantitative data, the selection of secondary school students' respondents was primarily guided by the research objectives. The Sub County was divided into eight administrative zones. The cluster sampling method was used by the researcher so as to ensure a broad coverage of the Sub- County. Systematic approach was later used to sample the schools from each cluster. This ensured that the existing sub-groups in the population were more or less reproduced in the sample as observed by Mugenda & Mugenda (2011). The total number of respondents sampled for the study was 684 as indicated in table 4.

Table 2

Sample Size of the Respondents

Category	No. of respondents
Sub County Education Officers	8
Class Teachers	56
Guidance & Counselling teachers	28
Students	560
Total	652

Data Analysis Procedure

For analysis on the objective of examining the gender differences on prevalence of suicide ideation and attempts the researcher made use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative statistics included percentages, frequencies and regression. For the qualitative data collected the researcher used thematic analysis. The themes included establishing the differences between boys and girls on personality traits like hopelessness, resentment, depression, adolescent crises and self -esteem, and their role on suicide ideation and attempts.

Findings and Discussions

Gender Differences on Peer Pressure leading to suicide ideation and attempts

Gender Differences on peer pressure leading to suicide ideation have been analyzed on Table 3.

Table 3

Students' Opinions on Peer Pressure leading to suicide ideation and attempts

Statements	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Ratings</u>
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	<u>Boys</u>		<u>Girls</u>		SA	%	SD	%
	F	%	F	%				
I feel under pressure to please my friends	220	44	281	56	200	40	301	60
My friends help me boost myself image	235	47	266	53	205	41	296	59
Sometime I enjoy leisure with my peers	230	46	271	54	266	53	235	47
I don't feel that I can contribute anything positive to my peer group	190	38	311	62	261	52	240	48
My friends' don't like themselves	311	62	190	38	195	39	306	61

The research findings showed that 44% of the boys and 56% of the girls felt under pressure to please their friends although 62% of the girls and 38% of the boys felt they have nothing to contribute to their friends. On the other hand 47% of the boys and 53% of the girls felt that their friends did not boost their self-image while 46% of the boys and 54% of the girls enjoyed leisure with their peers. However 62% of the boys and 38% of the girls felt their friends did not like themselves. These findings have been consistent with studies on youth suicidal behaviors which have revealed that psychosocial influences from both the family and peers correlated with suicide attempts and ideation.

Harter and others (1992), for instance, showed that low social support from parents and peers were related to suicide ideation through inducing hopelessness and low self-worth. Prinstein and others (2000) similarly demonstrated that psychosocial risk factors related to peer and family functioning directly predicted suicide ideation and depressive symptoms in psychiatric patients. Given the significance of the family and peer relationships in children's and adolescents' social world, it is important to understand not only how interpersonal relationships in these two dimensions can place youths at risk of psychopathology, but whether and how familial and interpersonal functioning can buffer our new generation against self-destructive thoughts and behaviors.

Drugs and Substance Abuse Based on Gender, Age Structure and Type of School in Percentage

On assessing the age structure in the ratings of drugs and substance abuse, the results are illustrated on table 4 below;

Table 4

Drugs and Substance Abuse Based on Gender, Age Structure and Type of School in Percentage

Statements	<u>Gender(Age structure)</u>								<u>Type of School</u>			
	<u>Boys</u>				<u>Girls</u>				<u>Mixed</u>		<u>Single</u>	
	<u>12-15</u>		<u>16-19</u>		<u>12-15</u>		<u>16-19</u>		F	%	F	%
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%				
	92	38	84	35	161	62	169	65	105	42	145	58

The study established that the age bracket 12-15, 38% boys and 62% girls and the age bracket of 16-19, 35% boys' and 65% girls confirmed that the students were abusing drugs. Out of the total number of respondents 42% were from mixed schools and 58% were from single sex schools. The study showed that the girls were more honest in revealing the issue of drugs and that substance abuse was a problem among them. However the boys were in denial on this issue. These ratings were also confirmed by the focus group discussion with the teachers and interview schedule with the guidance and counseling teachers who concurred that drug abuse had become very common among the students. One teacher commented that "the boys were more affected than the girls". According to a 2009 report by Teens and Alcohol Resource Center, 80% of high school seniors in USA had used alcohol at some point. Most of them did not realize that it could contribute to depressive symptoms that would eventually lead to teen suicide. One may feel depressed than before leading to suicidal thoughts (Elisha, 2008).

Levels of Suicide Ideation and Attempts in Schools by Gender in Mathioya Sub County

Analysis on Table 5 below shows the following the levels of Suicide Ideation and Attempts in Schools by Gender in Mathioya Sub County

Table 5

Levels of Suicide Ideation and Attempts in Schools by Gender in Mathioya Sub County

Statements	Frequency	Boys	Girls	%
Poor performance	6	3	3	21
Indiscipline	5	4	1	18

Withdrawal	5	2	3	18
Low esteem	4	3	1	14
Conflict with teachers	4	3	1	14
Conflict with students	3	1	2	11
Others	1	0	1	4

The study shows that in Mathioya Sub County, half of the students who attributed suicide to poor performance were girls and the other half was boys. Four boys attributed it to indiscipline as compared to one girl in school while 3 boys attributed suicide to conflict with teachers as compared to one girl. Reviews from recent studies have indicated that there may be gender-specific patterns of early risk factors and developmental pathways associated with suicidal ideation and behavior in adolescence and young adulthood. For example, hopelessness, dependence, and poor social-emotional adjustment have been identified as early precursors for later ideation in boys, while family discord, early behavioral problems, and poor perception of family roles have been identified as risk factors for girls (Brent, 2018).

Impact of the school on suicide ideation and attempts among the boys and girls

The students were asked to give their opinions, ideas and responses about their experiences in school. Table 6 presents the summary of the research findings;

Table 6

Impact of the School on Suicide Ideation and Attempts

Statements	<u>Gender</u>				<u>Ratings</u>			
	<u>Boys</u>		<u>Girls</u>		<u>SA</u>		<u>SD</u>	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I hate most of the school subjects	200	40	301	60	215	43	287	57
School days are my happiest days	195	39	306	61	240	48	261	52
Given a chance I would quit school immediately	220	44	281	46	190	38	311	62
Teachers always make me feel stupid	296	59	205	41	230	46	271	54
School is so much fun	261	42	240	48	311	62	190	38
Most of what I learn at school doesn't make sense	240	48	261	52	256	51	245	49

The study established that 60% of the girls and 40% of the boys hated most of the school subjects, 39% of the boys and 61% of indicated that school days were their happiest days. At the sometime 44% of the boys and 36% of the girls would quit school immediately while 59% of the boys and 41% of the expressed the view that their teachers made them feel stupid. Only 42% of the boys and 38% of the girls felt that school was fun and 48% of the boys and 52% of the expressed the view that what they learn does not seem to make sense. This could mean that the school set up affected the students negatively to the extent of suicide ideation and attempts. This view was also expressed by the class teachers that many students seemed very bored with school work and looked for every available opportunity to be away from school. Some guidance and counseling teachers complained that some students preferred to sleep during the group counseling sessions instead of paying attention to the words of counsel. These findings are confirmed by Rainham (2009), that high school years should be a great experience but many demands and rapid changes can make them one of the most stressful times of life. Students today face increasing amounts of school work, a rapidly changing curriculum, assignment deadlines and exams. They worry about selecting careers and postsecondary programs. They must balance school work with sports; hobbies and social life. Money is always a worry as is dealing with issues of alcohol and drugs and now there is the new fear of violence in and around the schools (Rainham 2009).

Conclusions

In relation to gender ratings, 65% of boys and 35% of the girls were established to have worry. On fearfulness, the study established 45% among boys and 55% among the girls. The study also established that 59% of the boys and 41% of the girls had disturbed sleep patterns, while 51% of the boys and 49 % of the girls had frequent headaches. The study also established that 52% of the boys and 48% of the girls had thoughts of suicide. The findings of the study show that ratings on self-esteem accounted for 57.6% for boys and 42.4% for girls. The researcher established that self-worthiness for boys and girls was 58% the study found out that 38% of the boys in the age bracket of 12-15 and 62% in the age bracket of 16-19 while 45% of the girls in the age bracket of 12-15 and 55% in the age bracket of 16-19 felt that the teachers had a major role to play in suicidal ideation and attempts and the majority of this students were in mixed schools with 56% and 44% in single sex schools and 42% respectively, self-acceptance 56% and

44%, self-respect 52% and 48%, worthiness at 60% and 40% and competence was at 62% and 38% for boys and girls respectively.

The research findings showed that 44% of the boys and 56% of the girls felt under pressure to please their friends although 62% of the girls and 38% of the boys felt they have nothing to contribute to their friends. On the other hand 47% of the boys and 53% of the girls felt that their friends don't boost their self-image while 46% of the boys and 54% of the girls enjoy leisure with their peers. However, 62% of the boys and 38% of the girls felt their friends did not like themselves.

Recommendations of the Study

1. Mainstream Guidance and Counselling into the school curriculum; this complements the capacity building of Guidance & Counselling. The importance of guidance and counseling studies in the normal school curriculum would potentially inculcate at an early age a positive behavioral culture and coping mechanisms in students through the delivery and imparting of quality knowledge and information on the pertinent causes of suicide and other negative behavioral tendencies.
2. Enhance emphasis on co-curricular activities in school programs and the positive linkage to talent development. In the current school curriculum, most non-academic activities are considered peripheral and therefore attract little premium as they are labeled as non-core activities. Sports and other co-curricular activities are both recreational and potential career fronts. When well nurtured, sporting activities are deterrents to emotional imbalances that escalate to stress and the resultant social maladies.
3. On personality traits, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) can help students with borderline personality disorder to identify and change core beliefs and behaviors that underlie inaccurate perceptions of themselves and others and problems interacting with others. CBT may help reduce a range of mood and anxiety symptoms and reduce the number of suicidal or self-harming behaviors.
4. It is imperative for the parents to love their children unconditionally, without setting conditions for high grades. They must also provide basic needs to their children, to minimize feelings of discrimination. It is important to increase communication in the homes, so that the

children can express their views without fear, at the same time parents can observe the changes taking place in their children lives. Parents need to be involved in the life of their children, in order to increase feelings of trust and being wanted whether they are performing well or not.

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