

Stress and Suicidal Tendencies among College Students in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

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KEYWORDS:

Overall Stressors
Academic Stressors
Suicidal Tendencies
College Students

CITATION:

Shamsiah Banu Mohamad Hanefar, &
Hamidul Huq. (2024). Stress and Suicidal
Tendencies among College Students in
Bangladesh. *Malaysian Journal of Social
Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 9(5),
e002837.
<https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v9i5.2837>

The primary aim of this research is to ascertain the correlation between various stressors, including academic stress, and the propensity for suicidal tendencies among college students. The investigation involved the examination of a randomly selected sample of 60 students from diverse academic sessions at a government college in Bangladesh. Notably, prior research had not thoroughly explored the effects of stress in the context of government college in Bangladesh. The research offers a fresh perspective on Emile Durkheim's typology of suicide, examining altruistic, anomic, egoistic, and fatalistic suicide in the context of various stressors and academic stress. This is significant as earlier studies largely adhered to conventional interpretations of Durkheim's typology. Crucially, this research fills a gap in the existing literature, contributing valuable insights for future researchers in this field. It sheds light on the complex relationship between stress and suicidal tendencies, specifically emphasising the role of academic stress, and it broadens our understanding of how various forms of stress impact college students.

Contribution/Originality: This study is one of very few studies which have investigated the correlation between various stressors, including academic stress, and suicidal tendencies among college students in a government college in Bangladesh, providing a fresh perspective on Emile Durkheim's typology of suicide and filling a crucial gap in the existing literature.

1. Introduction

Over the past decade, there has been a deeply concerning rise in suicide rates among teenagers and young adults worldwide. According to World Health Organisation (WHO, 2023), annually, 703,000 individuals lose their lives to suicide, and a significant number of others make suicide attempts. Suicide is a tragic occurrence that spans all age groups, and in 2019, it ranked as the fourth most common cause of death for individuals between the ages of 15 and 29 worldwide (WHO, 2023). Given that a significant portion of these

individuals are students attending schools and colleges, it is imperative that we address the issue of "suicidal tendencies among students." This requires the urgent attention of researchers, educators, and policymakers in the field of education. College students are in a unique phase of life, marked by distinct cognitive and developmental changes. They undergo crucial processes of physical and sexual development, moral and emotional growth, and the establishment of new identities (Kleinemeier et al., 2010). As adolescents transition from teenagers, they often display egocentric behaviours and a fearlessness when it comes to taking risks (Christie & Viner, 2005). College students are frequently confronted with numerous social challenges, including financial constraints, complex interactions with new peers, academic pressures, relationships with instructors, familial issues, career aspirations, and other personal concerns, all of which contribute to stress (Kai-Wen, 2009; Ross et al., 1999). Teenagers are vulnerable to significant psychological, physical, cognitive, behavioural, and social consequences primarily as a result of these stressors (Hamaideh, 2011). Moreover, academic stress, in particular, has been demonstrated to be a key factor in the development of various disorders in students' lives. Academic stressors encompass the desire for improved academic performance, meeting assignment deadlines, managing educational expenses, navigating unhealthy competition with peers, coping with criticism from instructors, and dealing with political tensions within educational institutions, among other challenges (Struthers et al., 2000). Nonetheless, one of the prevalent disorders linked to both "general stress" and "academic stress" is the "suicidal tendencies" among students (Garrison, 1989). While stress can contribute to suicidal thoughts, this tendency doesn't always result in the loss of life; it can instead stifle creative thinking, erode imaginative abilities, and disrupt the natural well-being of students. The repercussions of students exhibiting suicidal tendencies are substantial and enduring. Therefore, the paper aims to investigate the impact of academic stressors and other stressors on students' suicidal tendencies among college students.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Overview of stress and suicidal tendencies

In medical terms, stress is described as an exaggerated reaction to external forces (Familoni, 2008), which can include environmental, social, or internal factors like illness. Different studies suggest that the level of stress a person experiences is influenced by their personality and cognitive processes. Suicide, traditionally seen as a deliberate act to end one's life due to mental health issues (Shneidman & Edwin, 1993), is now understood to be influenced by cultural norms and social factors. Stress is recognised as a significant factor in suicidal tendencies and behaviours, especially among individuals facing greater levels of stress and certain mental conditions (Stewart & Shields, 2019). While stress is a common aspect of student life, empirical evidence indicates its significant contribution to suicidal behaviours (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Social theories also highlight the role of societal factors in shaping stress levels and suicidal tendencies among students (Durkheim, 2002).

2.2. Theoretical perspective of stress and suicidal tendencies

Emile Durkheim's theory on suicidal tendencies, outlined in his seminal work "Suicide," suggests that suicide rates are influenced by social factors rather than individual psychological issues alone (Jones, 1984). Emile Durkheim defines suicide as any death resulting from a person's intentional action, knowing it will end their life (Pickering & Walford, 2000). He outlines four types: egoistic, altruistic, anomic, and fatalistic. Egoistic

suicide happens when someone feels disconnected from society, like they don't fit in. These individuals lack social support and struggle to find their place, leading them to see suicide as a way to escape loneliness. Altruistic suicide occurs when someone is deeply tied to a group and sacrifices themselves for its benefit. Anomic suicide arises from a lack of social norms, often during times of high stress or sudden change. For instance, extreme financial loss might push someone to see suicide as the only way out. Fatalistic suicide happens when individuals feel tightly controlled or oppressed. They may see suicide as the only escape from their oppressive circumstances, such as slavery or persecution (Jones, 1984; Pickering & Walford, 2000).

Comparing Durkheim's typology with conventional typologies underscores the significance of incorporating social factors into the understanding of suicide. Conventional typologies often concentrate on individual attributes such as mental health conditions, personality traits, or life circumstances. One notable example is the Interpersonal-Psychological Theory of Suicidal Behaviour (IPTS), developed by Thomas Joiner, which posits that suicidal tendencies stem from feelings of burdensomeness, thwarted belongingness, and a developed capability for suicide due to acclimation to pain and reduced fear of death (Joiner, 2005 in Joiner et al., 2009). Numerous studies have explored and substantiated components of the IPTS. For example, research by Van Orden et al. (2012) demonstrated that perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness correlated significantly with suicidal inclinations and behaviours among psychiatric patients and community adults, even after controlling for depressive symptoms. Similarly, Anestis et al. (2011) found in their study among undergraduate students that emotionally dysregulated individuals with low distress tolerance and high negative urgency exhibited heightened levels of suicidal desire, as indicated by perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness.

While conventional typologies predominantly focus on individual-level factors, such as mental health conditions or personality traits, Durkheim's typology accentuates the broader social context surrounding suicide. By acknowledging the influence of social integration, regulation, and change on suicidal tendencies, Durkheim's typology offers a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon. This emphasis on social factors holds significant implications for comprehending and addressing suicide, particularly among college students. College campuses, characterised by extensive social interaction and governance, present unique environments where factors like academic pressure, social isolation, financial constraints, and cultural norms can contribute to feelings of alienation and disengagement among students.

2.3. Empirical studies on stress and suicidal tendencies among students

In Bangladeshi society, college life represents a critical phase, immediately preceding the moment when students are expected to assume familial responsibilities. In the midst of this unrestrained psychological development, they encounter various forms of stress that can lead to depression and anxiety. In recent years, there has been an observable increase in suicidal attempts among college-level students (Ferdous & Alam, 2021). In general, stress-induced suicidal tendencies among students have become a pressing concern for educators, academic professionals, and parents, owing to multiple factors associated with the teaching and learning environment in the context of government college-level education. In Bangladesh, college-level students face a multitude of external pressures related to their family, finances, education, culture, and complex political interactions in their daily lives. These intricacies undeniably involve numerous stress-inducing factors

such as health-related challenges, financial difficulties, familial disruptions, concerns about post-education unemployment, political confrontations, romantic relationship failures, intricate social dynamics among college peers, and academic issues, among others ([Arusha & Biswas, 2020](#); [Sultana, 2011](#)). Given that the mindset of college-level students differs from that of others, their mental processes, problem-solving approaches, and responses to stressors also exhibit distinctions. As a result, college students in Bangladesh frequently contend with significant psychological stress, which significantly influences their physical, cognitive, and behavioural health. Stress has been shown to be a prevalent societal challenge that impacts individuals regardless of their age, gender, or geographic location ([Banerjee & Chatterjee, 2016](#)).

Apart from general stressors, academic stressors undeniably exert a detrimental influence on students' lives. Numerous studies have identified typical sources of academic stress, such as an excessive workload, deficient social skills and time management capabilities, and peer group competition ([Fairbrother & Warn, 2003](#)). A substantial body of research, carried out in both Indian and Bangladeshi contexts, consistently yields similar findings ([Ara et al., 2016](#); [Rahman et al., 2020](#); [Sreeramareddy et al., 2007](#)). The education system itself contributes to the escalation of stress levels among students, with stressors stemming from factors like semester-based grading systems, overcrowded classrooms, limited resources and facilities along with heightened expectations ([Pertwi et al., 2020](#)), extensive syllabi ([Agrawal & Chahar, 2007](#); [Sreeramareddy et al., 2007](#)), and heightened familial and institutional expectations, as indicated by [Ang et al. \(2016\)](#). These factors have been recognized as significant stressors that can lead to suicidal tendencies.

A common misconception is that students are among the least affected by problems or stress, as the sole expectation from them has traditionally been to study, which was not commonly considered a source of stress ([Masih & Gulrez, 2006](#)). However, students' academic lives themselves can indeed be a significant source of stress, and societal and familial expectations related to their academic performance further intensify this academic stress ([Masih & Gulrez, 2006](#)). [Lee and Larson \(2000\)](#) attribute this stress to a combination of an unsupportive learning environment, academic workload, and students' socio-economic backgrounds. [Hans \(1956\)](#) in his model of 'stress as a response', outlines how individuals react to stressors. According to this model, when individuals experience overwhelming stress, they may undergo physiological and psychological changes that exacerbate feelings of distress and hopelessness ([Viner, 1999](#)). These changes can include increased heart rate, changes in behaviour, and emotional instability. If individuals lack effective coping mechanisms or support systems to manage their stress, they may become more vulnerable to suicidal thoughts or behaviours as a means of escape from their overwhelming feelings. This issue is a matter of great concern, with [Kadapatti and Vijayalaxmi \(2012\)](#) labelling it as a 'career stopper' that can lead to thoughts of self-harm, emphasising the urgent need for attention from education policymakers. According to the National Crime Records Bureau in India, a student takes their own life every hour ([Saha, 2017](#)). Among these cases, 1.8% of students commit suicide due to examination failure or not achieving their anticipated academic results. Similarly, In Bangladesh, student suicides have become a widely discussed issue within educational institutions, especially following the public examination results. There have been numerous reported cases of suicide and suicide attempts in response to academic performance ([Ferdous & Alam, 2021](#)). In addition to the time surrounding exam result announcements, students may also consider suicide attempts during the academic semesters. Higher education students face considerable pressure as they strive to equip themselves for future employment, frequently confronting various challenges. Drawing from Durkheim's ([Durkheim, 2002](#))

observations in these challenges arise from the disparity between institutional means and societal goals, leading to significant stressors. Academic stress stands out as a major contributing factor to this alarming trend of suicide attempts.

Based on the authors' experience, there is a noticeable absence of counselling services on college campuses and a lack of organised awareness programs addressing stress management and suicidal tendencies among students. Despite numerous stress-induced suicide attempts observed within the college, there are limited structured initiatives in place. In this environment, suicide or suicide attempts are often viewed as sinful and heinous activities, with the underlying factors left unaddressed. Considering the limited research on the connection between stress and suicidal tendencies among students within the college-level education system in Bangladesh, it is crucial to comprehend the depth of the correlation between the types of stress experienced by students and their susceptibility to suicidal thoughts and actions. Additionally, it is crucial to explore how academic stress influences these suicidal tendencies.

In a country as small as Bangladesh, earlier studies have identified various factors contributing to suicides, including poverty, economic hardships, a patriarchal social system, parenting behaviours, romantic relationships, and marital conflicts, among others. A demographic and risk factors investigation into suicidal behaviour in Bangladesh revealed that, among 358 documented suicide cases spanning from 2009 to 2018, 37.7% were students. A significant proportion of these student suicides took place during or following the announcement of public examination results ([Arafat, Mali & Akther, 2018](#)). Durkheim's theory on suicide, identifies several stressors stemming from societal conditions. Amid these general stressors, academic stress has emerged as a significant factor that warrants particular attention, especially in the context of Bangladesh. Although there have been numerous studies exploring the link between academic stress and students' inclination towards suicide in Western countries and specific regions of South Asia, a research void still exists when it comes to the domain of college-level education in Bangladesh ([Ara, Uddin & Kabir, 2016](#)).

Numerous academic stress factors, as outlined in the available literature, do exist within the framework of college education in Bangladesh, although their intensity may vary. For example, [Wilks \(2008\)](#) emphasised stressors such as financial challenges, interactions with lecturers, difficulties in adapting to the campus environment, a lack of support networks, insufficient recreational facilities, and limited engagement in extracurricular activities as significant factors. Conversely, [Ang et al. \(2016\)](#) pointed out irrational disciplinary rules, excessive and imbalanced academic workloads, and self and familial expectations as stressors. Numerous studies, including those conducted by [Zhang et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Soloff, Lynch and Kelly \(2002\)](#), have recognised college admission processes, frustrations, student politics, and romantic relationship rejections as noteworthy stressors experienced by students. These stressors are somewhat applicable within the college education system in Bangladesh, highlighting the pressing need for additional research to delve deeper into the connection between various stressors and the inclination of students towards suicidal tendencies, with particular emphasis on academic stress.

Students play a pivotal role as valuable assets within their families and society at large. The presence of stress and suicidal tendencies among students carries the potential for a range of adverse effects on their families, including familial breakdown, weakened bonds, inner conflicts, trauma, sorrow, despair, and mental turmoil ([Ara, Uddin & Kabir, 2016](#)).

Additionally, students' inclinations toward suicide can result in societal disruption, a reduced social standing, a sense of suffering, and a loss of confidence and creative insight (Mamun & Griffiths, 2020). By investigating the various stressors impacting students' propensity for suicidal tendencies, particularly in the context of government college-level education in Bangladesh, this study aims to stimulate further research with greater depth and focus. This constitutes the fundamental justification for undertaking this study. With this underlying rationale, the study endeavours to accomplish two primary objectives: (1) investigate the relationship between diverse stress factors (overall stressors) and students' tendencies toward suicidal tendencies, and (2) evaluate the influence of academic stressors on students' suicidal tendencies.

3. Research Methodology

As there is a growing consensus that the quantitative research approach is particularly well-suited for assessing causal relationships in the realm of psychological, behavioural, and cognitive issues (Park & Park, 2016), this study has opted for a quantitative approach employing a survey method. The primary instrument for data collection was a questionnaire, and data was gathered from 60 students at a government college in Bangladesh, using a simple random sampling technique.

Situated in the southwestern region of Bangladesh, the selected government college where this research was conducted is renowned as one of the largest and most prestigious institutions in the Khulna division. This college offers education at the higher secondary, honours, and master's levels, and it is equipped with 154 faculties from four academic disciplines: Business Administration, Science, Arts, and Social Sciences. However, for the purpose of conducting this study on the connection between overall stress and academic stress with suicidal tendencies among students, we focused our investigation on a specific, well-regarded department within this government college - the Department of Sociology. This choice was prompted by local newspaper reports revealing that three students, all enrolled in the Department of Sociology, had tragically taken their own lives within the past two years (Students at Local College Commit Suicide, 2020). Additionally, this department annually admits 1,000 students as their first choice due to its consistently impressive academic performance. This department comprises ten faculty members, and each classroom accommodates nearly 240 students. The environment, however, is often not conducive to effective learning due to limited access to educational resources, strict schedules, and regulations. These factors raise the central research question: does academic stress play a role in students' propensity for suicidal tendencies within this challenging academic context? Our curiosity to investigate this scenario was further fuelled by Bregnbæk's (2011) findings that academic stress was evident in relatively elite colleges.

This research gathered a sample of 60 students (38 males and 22 females) encompassing various stages of their academic journey, from higher secondary level to master level with the aim of ensuring a more inclusive and representative sample. Student registration numbers were obtained from the college database, and a lottery method was employed to choose the 60 samples. The initial sample size was 100; however, due to factors like low attendance, which is a common occurrence in Bangladeshi colleges, as well as other unavoidable circumstances, the final number was reduced to 60. The choice of a particular sampling technique is typically contingent on its practicality, the required level of accuracy, and considerations of cost and time efficiency. In the context of quantitative research, simple random sampling is recognised as a fair method for reducing bias,

particularly when dealing with a larger population and aiming to select a smaller sample size efficiently within a limited timeframe.

A questionnaire consisting of 18 questions/ statements was developed as an instrument to investigate and achieved the research objectives. Part A consists of 6 questions related to demographic information and Part B with 12 questions/ statements pertaining to measure variables including 'overall stressor', 'academic stress', and 'suicidal tendency' using 5-point Likert Scale. The questionnaire also measured physical, behavioural, cognitive and psychological impact of different stress factors in students' life. The questionnaire underwent validation through expert review by two experts to ensure its adequacy in measuring the research objectives. Prior to the study, a pilot study was carried out within the same academic context, involving 30 students from various academic sessions at the college. The internal reliability was assessed using Cronbach Alpha, yielding an average value exceeding 0.7.

4. Results and Discussions

This section of the study explores the impact of overall stressors and academic stressors on students and its association with suicidal tendencies. [Table 1](#) presents data indicating that educational challenges (18.4%) occupy the foremost position, with economic difficulties (16.8%), family-related issues (16.8%), and the fear on unemployment (15.3%) following closely behind. Conversely, health-related complexities (8.2%) were identified as the least significant stressor.

Table 1: Overall stressors affecting students

| Stress Factors | Responses | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|
| | N (60) | Percent |
| Educational Issues | 36 | 18.4% |
| Economic Hardship | 33 | 16.8% |
| Family Issues | 33 | 16.8% |
| Fear of Unemployment | 30 | 15.3% |
| Political Aggression | 16 | 8.2% |
| Failure in Romantic Affairs | 12 | 6.1% |
| Health Related Complexities | 16 | 8.2% |
| Friends Issues | 20 | 10.2% |
| Total | 196 | 100.0% |

*Students can indicate more than one answer

This result reminds us of the gap between institutional mean and academic goal - an imperative to lead toward anomic suicide, as per Durkheim's suicide theory ([Durkheim, 2002](#); [Jones, 1984](#)). To some extent, these findings align with the study by [Pritchard and Wilson \(2005\)](#). They classified stressors into categories such as relationship stress, financial stress, physical and mental health, body satisfaction, and social stress. Nevertheless, the outcomes exhibit a noteworthy deviation from the findings by [Pritchard and Wilson \(2005\)](#) concerning the influence of physical health and body satisfaction as stressors. The significance of "family-related problems" as a notable stressor has also been confirmed by studies conducted by [Gallagher, Gill and Sysko \(2000\)](#) and [Haas et al. \(2003\)](#). In the context of Bangladesh, where job opportunities are limited compared to the pool of educated individuals, concerns about securing employment after completing their

academic journey weigh heavily on students' minds. Most government college-level students come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and they are expected to shoulder familial responsibilities during this period, as pointed out by [Arafat, Mali and Akhter \(2018\)](#).

The study also identified various academic stressors that could potentially influence suicidal tendencies. These stressors include factors such as personal insecurities, the anxiety of not succeeding, the volume of coursework, assignments, tuition expenses, faculty interactions, the learning environment, and political associations within the college campus (see [Table 2](#)). Within these academic stressors, the workload (28.35%), feelings of personal inadequacy (25%), and the fear of failure (16.7%) stand out as the most significant contributors to academic stress. On the other hand, assignment, relationship with faculty members and study environment did not appear to be significant sources of stress. In practice, government college-level education in Bangladesh tends to be more exam-focused than assignment-oriented, with students typically required to complete only a few assignments throughout the year. Given the importance of exam results in securing prestigious jobs and the competitive job market, fear of failure was likely perceived as the most significant academic stressor by the students.

Table 2: Academic Stressors affecting students

| Academic Stressors | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Personal inadequacy | 15 | 25.0 |
| Fear of failure | 10 | 16.7 |
| Study workload | 17 | 28.3 |
| Assignments | 3 | 5.0 |
| Tuition and Study costs | 5 | 8.3 |
| Relationship with faculty members | 3 | 5.0 |
| Study Environment | 2 | 3.3 |
| Political Affiliation in the campus | 5 | 8.3 |
| Total | 60 | 100.0 |

These findings bear some resemblance to the research conducted by [Misra and Castillo \(2004\)](#). They divided academic stress into five distinct categories: conflicts, frustrations, pressures, changes, and self-induced stress. [Mishra \(2018\)](#) conducted a study that assessed the extent of academic stress among both male and female students, identifying fear of lower grades, job-related anxiety, financial challenges, assignment loads, study environments, and managing extensive curricula as the principal sources of stress for students. [Ong and Cheong's \(2009\)](#) findings partially supported these conclusions, highlighting that the fear of receiving lower grades and the apprehension of failing examinations were the primary academic stressors for students. Additionally, the issue of personal inadequacy has been emphasised by [Gini and Espelage \(2014\)](#) and [Holt et al. \(2015\)](#), who concluded that personal insecurities could lead to a lack of self-confidence, feelings of vulnerability, and, consequently, elevated stress levels. Nevertheless, there is room for further research to delve more deeply into the impact of academic stressors on students.

In terms of suicidal tendencies, the finding indicates that students may be at risk of developing suicidal tendencies if they exhibit a minimum of 10 problematic behaviours, which encompass severe sadness and mood swings, hopelessness, sleep disturbances,

sudden emotional calmness, social withdrawal, alterations in personality or appearance, self-destructive or dangerous actions, recent traumatic experiences and life crises, preparations for suicide, and making suicidal threats (Table 3). Notably, this result closely aligns with a study by Kay et al. (2009), which introduced a scale for assessing suicidal tendencies among students, encompassing five problematic behaviours that precede suicide, namely, preparing for suicide, discussing or indicating suicide, recent traumatic experiences or life crises, self-destructive behavior, and significant changes in personality or appearance. Furthermore, this finding aligns with the research conducted by Phillips et al. (2002), where they evaluated the propensity for suicide based on recognised risk factors such as elevated depressive symptoms, intense sorrow or mood fluctuations, disruptions in sleep patterns, sudden emotional stability, and severe interpersonal disputes preceding suicidal incidents.

Table 3: Students' suicidal tendencies

| Tendency | Extremely Unlikely % | Unlikely % | Neutral % | Likely % | Extremely Likely % |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Severe sadness | 6.7 | 11.7 | 23.3 | 46.7 | 11.7 |
| Hopelessness | 8.3 | 16.7 | 25 | 41.7 | 8.3 |
| Sleep Problems | 16.7 | 13.3 | 26.7 | 26.7 | 16.7 |
| Sudden calmness | 1.7 | 15 | 35 | 46.7 | 1.7 |
| Withdrawal from social life | 6.7 | 23.3 | 26.7 | 38.3 | 5 |
| Changes in Personality | 0 | 13.3 | 36.7 | 43.3 | 6.7 |
| Self-destructiveness | 15 | 36.7 | 15 | 23.3 | 10 |
| Recent Trauma | 16.7 | 30 | 26.7 | 16.7 | 10 |
| Suicidal Preparations | 38.3 | 36.7 | 11.7 | 13.3 | 13.3 |
| Threatening on suicide | 28.3 | 31.7 | 18.3 | 15 | 6.7 |

These results hold significance as earlier investigations (e.g., Rony, 2018; Shah, Ahmed & Arafat, 2017) predominantly investigated into the reasons and aftermath of suicide within the specific context of Bangladesh. While there are indeed studies that have investigated student suicides (Arafat, Mali & Akther, 2018), there appears to be a lack of research examining 'suicidal tendencies' among students, particularly within the context of college-level education in Bangladesh. These results are relevant because they underscore the need for practical measures to address the internal obstacles within our education system. Both stressors and suicidal tendencies among students pose significant barriers to our educational advancement.

In Table 4, a cross-tabulation is displayed, showcasing the relationship between overall stressors and students' suicidal tendencies. The rows on the left side of the table detail the various components of overall stressors, while the columns provide information about the frequency and percentages of suicidal tendency, rated on a Likert scale spanning from "extremely unlikely" to "extremely likely."

Table 4: Cross Tabulation of Overall Stressors and Suicidal Tendencies.

| Overall stressors | Suicidal Ideation | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | Extremely Unlikely | Unlikely | Neutral | Likely | Extremely Likely | |
| Educational Issues | 12 20.0% | 5 8.3% | 8 13.3% | 9 15.0% | 2 3.3% | 36 60.0% |
| Economic Hardship | 8 13.3% | 9 15.0% | 7 11.7% | 7 11.7% | 2 3.3% | 33 55.0% |
| Family Issues | 7 11.7% | 7 11.7% | 7 11.7% | 8 13.3% | 4 6.7% | 33 55.0% |
| Fear of Unemployment | 10 16.7% | 7 11.7% | 4 6.7% | 8 13.3% | 1 1.7% | 30 50.0% |
| Political Aggression | 8 13.3% | 2 3.3% | 3 5.0% | 3 5.0% | 0 .0% | 16 26.7% |
| Failure in Romantic Affairs | 1 1.7% | 4 6.7% | 1 1.7% | 4 6.7% | 2 3.3% | 12 20.0% |
| Health Related Complexities | 6 10.0% | 3 5.0% | 2 3.3% | 4 6.7% | 1 1.7% | 16 26.7% |
| Friends Issues | 5 8.3% | 3 5.0% | 7 11.7% | 3 5.0% | 2 3.3% | 20 33.3% |
| Total | 18 30.0% | 14 23.3% | 10 16.7% | 14 23.3% | 4 6.7% | 60 100.0% |

Out of all the contributing factors, educational concerns, economic hardships and family issues were rated more than 50%. These three factors stand out as the primary contributors to suicidal tendencies among the participants. Conversely, the factors with the least impact were political conflicts, romantic relationship failures, and health-related complications. This result aligns with the primary objective of our study, addressing one of our research objectives, which focuses on the connection between various stress types and students' suicidal tendencies. College students play a vital role in society, participating in multifaceted interactions not only on campus but also in their personal, family, and social spheres. As a result, they encounter a range of stressors, including personal challenges, low self-esteem, emotional distress, and career-related pressures, all of which can contribute to the development of suicidal tendencies, as observed in the research by [Ji and Zhang \(2011\)](#).

To evaluate the magnitude and direction of the linear association between the scores related to 'Types of Stresses' and 'Suicidal Tendency,' as well as 'Academic Stress' and 'Suicidal Tendency,' we computed a bivariate Pearson's Product-moment correlation coefficient (r) ([Table 5](#)).

The Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis revealed a strongly positive and statistically significant relationship between 'Overall stressors' and 'suicidal tendencies' ($r = 0.715$, $p < 0.001$). This provides substantial support for the hypothesis "H1: There is a significant relationship between the types of stress that students face and suicidal tendencies." Similarly, when assessing the correlation between 'academic stressors' and 'suicidal tendencies,' the Pearson Product-Moment correlation was determined to be

moderately positive and statistically significant ($r = 0.533$, $p < 0.001$). This finding confirms the hypothesis "H2: Academic stress has an influence over students' suicidal tendencies." It's important to note that, prior to computing the r values, an evaluation of data normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity confirmed that these assumptions were met.

Table 5: Pearson's Product-moment Correlation Coefficient (r) values.

| | | Academic stress | Types of Stresses |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Suicidal tendency | Pearson Correlation | .533 | .715 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 60 | 60 |

Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

The investigation into stress-related suicidal tendencies among government college students unveiled a significant relationship between the overall of stressors students encounter and their inclination toward suicidal thoughts and behaviours. This suggests that as overall stressors increase, there is a tendency for students to report higher levels of suicidal thoughts and behaviours. These findings align closely with the objectives of this study, which sought to examine the depth of the relationship between different stress types and students' tendencies toward suicide, as well as the impact of academic stressors on suicidal tendencies. The study shed light on the fact that students at the government college level in Bangladesh contend with a wide array of stressors, encompassing educational challenges, financial hardships, familial concerns, anxieties related to post-academic employment, interpersonal conflicts, romantic relationship setbacks, health-related complications, and intricate social connections. However, the intensity of these stressors varies significantly. Among all the stressors, educational challenges and financial difficulties, closely followed by employment fears, emerged as the most prominent concerns for students. Within the realm of government college-level education in Bangladesh, academic stressors with the potential to affect students' proclivity toward self-harm encompass feelings of personal inadequacy, the fear of academic failure, the burden of substantial coursework, academic assignments, tuition expenses, interactions with faculty members, the quality of the learning environment, and involvement in political activities within the college campus. Among these academic stressors, the most prominent were the academic workload, feelings of personal inadequacy, and the fear of failure. However, it's worth noting that this article did not include discussion pertaining to the psychological, physical, behavioral, cognitive, or social consequences of these stressors.

5. Conclusion

This quantitative study addressed a previously overlooked but critical research gap by investigating the impact of stress on suicidal tendencies among college-level students in Bangladesh. By utilising a random sample selection and conducting quantitative analysis of survey data, this study expeditiously addressed two critical research objectives. Firstly, it affirmed a noteworthy correlation between overall stressors and the likelihood of students developing suicidal tendencies. Secondly, it illustrated a moderate positive correlation between academic stressors and students' suicidal tendencies. With increasing concerns about rising suicide rates among students, the study investigated into

the extensive range of stress factors identified in both general (overall) and academic life through a comprehensive literature review. It explored the depth of the connection between stress and students' inclination toward suicidal tendencies. The study's theoretical framework considered students' suicidal tendencies within Durkheim's suicidal typology, shedding new light on anomic, egoistic, and fatalistic suicides stemming from different types of stressors, beyond the conventional typology. The results were consistent with earlier studies in the field, confirming a significant relationship between various (overall) stressors and students' suicidal tendencies. Moreover, academic stressors were found to exert a moderate level of influence on students' susceptibility to suicidal tendencies. These findings are significant as they identify the root causes of difficulties in students' lives due to stress. They call for attention from educators, policymakers, and future researchers to address these issues effectively. Furthermore, understanding the underlying factors of suicidal tendencies can help raise awareness among students, potentially reducing such incidents. Given the potential impact of poor mental health on students' academic careers, there is an urgent need for substantial attention from educators, policymakers, and future researchers to provide effective interventions.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

This research used the research ethics approved by the Research Ethics Committee of University of Nottingham Malaysia. All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection.

Acknowledgement

Part of this article was extracted from a master dissertation submitted to University of Nottingham Malaysia.

Funding

This study received no funding.

Conflict of Interest

The authors reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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