

Original Article

A Tale of Lost Potential: Investigating the Tragic Demise of Young Adults in Bogura District's Dupchanchia, Kahaloo, and Sariakandi Sub-Districts of Bangladesh

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Abstract - In Bangladesh, the youth cohort holds immense potential for driving societal progress, yet their untimely demise poses a significant threat to national development goals. This research aims to investigate the factors contributing to premature mortality among individuals under 30 in the Bogura district. By focusing on selected sub-districts and engaging key community stakeholders, including local authorities, health professionals, and social leaders, the study seeks to understand the underlying causes of youth mortality. Through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, this research aims to bridge gaps in existing knowledge and perceptions surrounding youth mortality, analyzing data within social justice and psychological frameworks. Notably, the study strives to generate insights to inform policy interventions and community-based initiatives, aiming to safeguard the health and vitality of the youth populace and thereby support the realization of Bangladesh's vision for a 'Smart Bangladesh' by 2041. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural, economic, and psychological factors influencing youth mortality, with the ultimate goal of preserving this valuable human resource and fostering societal development.

Keywords - Drug addiction, Smart Bangladesh, Untimely death, Suicide, Accident.

1. Introduction

The contemporary youth cohort in Bangladesh holds the pivotal responsibility of spearheading the envisioned trajectory towards a 'Smart Bangladesh' by the year 2041. However, the untimely demise or failure to realize the potential of these youth constituents poses a formidable threat to the fulfillment of this national aspiration. Indeed, the youth demographic, characterized by its vigor and innovation, constitutes the cornerstone of future societal development and progress. Bogura, a crucial and vibrant district of Bangladesh, is experiencing unnatural deaths every single day. Now, Bogura is considered the first-ranked district in suicide and third-ranked district in road accidents in the year 2022 (BBS, 2023). National and local dailies are reporting about the deaths and losses as regular accidents; however, this study took it as a basic and significant research problem. Persons under 30 are dying who are supposed to be the earning members of his or her families and contributors to society. This is a great loss for the country specifically which is developing very fast. Hence, it becomes imperative to engage in rigorous academic inquiry

to discern the underlying determinants contributing to the premature mortality of these pivotal societal actors. Only through comprehensive investigation and understanding of these factors can effective strategies be formulated to safeguard the health and vitality of the youth populace, thereby fortifying the foundation upon which the envisioned 'Smart Bangladesh' can be actualized.

The research focuses on the demographic cohort within the Bogura district comprising individuals under the age of 30, with the objective of elucidating the factors contributing to untimely mortality within this specific population subset. It is a case study-based approach highlighting Dupchanchia, Kahaloo and Sariakandi Upazilas as sample areas. The interest in this particular population rises with the prospect and possibility that the age group represents. People aged around 30 are young adults and supposedly the most able-bodied and active population in general (Netz & Ben-Sira, 2006; Neugarten, 1975; Skirbekk, 2008). This population group shows prospects in both physical aptitude and mental



proficiency that have the potential to be enriched; coupled with proper nurturing and care, a community can effectively produce the best human resources for a society (Bynner & Parsons, 2002; Feldman, 2003; Gilligan, 1999; Hamilton & Torracco, 2013; Rivera-Batiz, 1992). However, Recent newspapers, Journals and other GOs and NGO sources show that recently Bogura district is ranking high in cases of suicide, road accidents, death due to drugs and many other undiscovered reasons. This kind of loss of young lives has a great impact on the total human resource environment, production supply chain and labor market as well (Akter et al., 2020). After the age of 18 years, the population earns legal rights in Bangladesh that enable them to actively participate in endeavors that incorporate them into acting as the major catalyst in the decision-making process of society. While being the present major contributor to every economic, social and cultural activity and development, the population also holds the future of these sectors that represent the country as a whole. There are a number of studies on suicide, drugs and other specific social actions which have adverse outcomes on the social structure. Previous research and studies focused mostly on suicide, and the theoretical framework was based on suicide and social bonding. Slightly apart from that perspective, this study concentrated specifically on an age group of people and the reason for their abnormal demise, which may include suicide, road accidents, drugs, and so many potential causes of untimely demise. This study is expected to bring a new set of data in a holistic way for this age range of people. Moreover, it will help us to fill up existing literature gaps, design new policy frameworks and understand our existing social trends. Most importantly this study will have a great statistical value as it will conduct survey, interview and FGD method.

People in this age group participate in economic activities, and being young contributors, they act as the most valuable asset, providing institutions with the best of their input. While earning for themselves they are also contributing to the bigger picture. The major portion of the age group working in the industries are young adults, and the labor-intensive working environments always call forth the need for young adults that can work hard (Aktar et al., 2020; Long, 1987; O'Regan & Quigley, 1991). In most cases, people going abroad to earn a living by themselves are also part of this age group. A huge portion of people around the age group are migrating to different countries for the purpose of working, studying or making a better career, adding to the economic cycle of the country actively or passively (Bal, 2014; Chowdhury, 2011). Within the country, the major number of female populations that are underprivileged or undervalued due to the lack of social support or economic backup are working in the garments sector, which has proven to be the major economic activity that has kept the growth of the economy of the country intact and running (Heath & Mushfiq Mobarak, 2015; Islam, 2021). We assume that the population in this age group are in a state where they are at the beginning

of their career and will represent their future generation. How they act now will affect their lives in the future, impacting their surroundings and society.

On the other hand, how society acts towards this population will also moderate their future path. Now, the issue that hinders all the prospects is the unnatural death of this population. According to BBS (2020), life expectancy in Bangladesh is 72.8 years, whereas people in their 20's are dying. This is a major issue that needs to be addressed. In Borga, there has been a significant number of deaths of young people in the last two years. Newspapers and Government documents also show that the number is abnormal; however, it is still understudied. Sometimes not even study. The causes of the deaths need to be identified and measures need to be put into place. Preserving this valuable human resource ought to be a priority amongst the policy makers of the country.

The study will enable better opportunities for policymakers to understand the scenarios revolving around the age group of interest and come up with more enhanced policy and planning. This age group is an asset that the policy needs to treat particularly. The case study of Dupchachia will be able to act as a model to understand the individual causes of deaths of young adults while enabling the authorities and planners to come up with better interventions. The study has the potential to pioneer vast and in-depth research on the topic of preserving human resources. Most precisely, this study has some aims and objectives in particular. They are:

1. To investigate the reasons behind the untimely deaths of individuals under 30 years old in the Bogura district of Bangladesh, focusing on three selected subdistricts.
2. To explore the perspectives and insights of key community stakeholders, including Union Parishad chairpersons, Upazilla Parishad chairpersons, UNO (Upazila Nirbahi Officer), UHFPO (Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer), OC (Officer-in-Charge) of local police stations, AC land (Assistant Commissioner of Land), social welfare officers, teachers, and social leaders, regarding the phenomenon of premature mortality among young people.
3. To assess the level of awareness and understanding among community representatives regarding the factors contributing to the untimely demise of young individuals in the study area.
4. To identify potential gaps in existing knowledge and perceptions regarding youth mortality and to explore any discrepancies between official records and community perspectives on the issue.
5. To analyze the collected data within the theoretical frameworks of social justice theory, overconfidence theory, and theories related to suicide in order to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying socio-cultural, economic, and psychological factors contributing to youth mortality in the Bogura district.

Overall, the idea is to generate insights and recommendations based on the findings of the study, aimed at informing potential interventions, policies, and community-based initiatives to address the root causes of premature deaths among young people in the study area.

2. Methodology

The study is based on a mixed-method approach. Basically, it is qualitative research with a few quantitative data collected to support the study objective. Data was collected from both the primary and the secondary data sources. This research investigates the phenomenon of untimely deaths among individuals under 30 years old in the Bogura district of Bangladesh, focusing on three selected subdistricts. The study employs a mixed-method approach, incorporating both primary and secondary data sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

Primary data collection relies on the key informant interview method, engaging individuals who hold significant roles within the community and have insights into the lives and circumstances of young people. Key informants include Union Parishad chairpersons, Upazilla Parishad chairpersons, UNO (Upazila Nirbahi Officer), UHFPO (Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer), OC (Officer-in-Charge) of local police stations, AC land (Assistant Commissioner of Land), social welfare officers, teachers, and social leaders. These stakeholders are chosen for their direct involvement or awareness of the issues affecting young people in the community.

A structured questionnaire comprising twenty questions has been developed to guide the interviews. The questionnaire is designed to explore the respondents' knowledge, perceptions, and insights regarding the untimely deaths of young individuals in the community.

Additionally, secondary data sources such as newspapers, articles, and government documents are consulted to supplement the primary data and provide contextual background information.

Theoretical frameworks, including social justice theory, overconfidence theory, and theories related to suicide, are employed to guide the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Overall, this methodological approach aims to uncover the underlying factors contributing to the premature mortality of young people in the Bogura district, offering insights for potential interventions and policy recommendations.

3. Literature Review

Previous research on the reasons behind unnatural and untimely deaths in Bangladesh has predominantly approached the issue from public health and medical perspectives. For

instance, a study conducted by Khan and Hossain (2011) examined unnatural death patterns in Dhaka City, drawing data from hospital reports and postmortem examinations. Their findings revealed a substantial prevalence of unnatural deaths, with accidents comprising the majority at 75.22%, followed by homicidal deaths at 14.02% and suicidal deaths at 10.76%. However, it is important to note that hospital-reported data may not fully capture the extent of such incidents, as many cases remain unreported within the medical and social systems.

Similarly, Rahim and Das (2009) conducted a study on the mortuary profile for unnatural deaths at the Forensic Medicine Department of Dhaka Medical College, focusing on the demographic and frequency patterns of such occurrences. Their analysis indicated a notable gender disparity, with males experiencing significantly higher rates of unnatural deaths compared to females. Moreover, the study underscored the correlation between the number of unnatural deaths and the law and order scenario of a city.

While these studies offer valuable insights into the forensic and public health aspects of unnatural deaths, there is a need to broaden the perspective to encompass socio-economic dimensions.

The “Jugantar” daily newspaper published an article on 23rd March of 2023 about a report by the World Bank where it states that out of all the untimely deaths 20% occur due to air pollution. Another article in “The Business Standard” said that, after cardiovascular illnesses, air pollution poses the second-greatest hazard to human health in Bangladesh with regard to life expectancy. The typical Bangladeshi life expectancy is shortened by 6.8 years as a result of environmental pollution, according to the Air Quality Life Index (AQLI). Nonetheless, people’s average life expectancy does not significantly drop even when they use dangerous tobacco. The average life expectancy is lowered by 2.1 years when tobacco is used. Malnutrition in mothers and children also shortens life expectancy by 1.4 years. An article published in the daily “Jugantar” news mentioned that unconsciousness among the people in the households is behind the increasing number of deaths by drowning.

“In the midst of her household chores, the mother is occupied, unaware of her one-year-old child playing in the yard. A brimming bucket of water sits nearby, posing an unforeseen danger. Tragically, the beloved child meets an untimely demise by falling into the water-filled bucket. While the mother diligently works with little Faria by her side, she fails to notice when the child wanders into the yard.”

This heart-wrenching incident occurred on July 31 in Sarkar Para, Boda Upazila, Panchagarh. The following day, another sorrowful event unfolded in Kalmakanda, Netrakona,

where siblings Tofail (5 years) and Afroza (3 years) drowned in a nearby pond. The stark reality reveals that drowning incidents persistently claim lives, extending beyond age boundaries. Notably, students Mobaswera Tanjum and Tasfia Jahan lost their lives in Gopalganj Lake on August 1st. According to the news, alarming statistics indicate that drowning ranks as the fourth leading cause of death for children under five in Bangladesh. Untimely shocking deaths are seen all around Bangladesh. This study wants the policymakers to bring their focus to this issue. Despite global aspirations outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the under-5 mortality rate is not diminishing; rather, fatalities are on the rise across all age groups. As mentioned in the article, police sources state that instances of drowning fatalities are significantly underreported to local police stations, leading to an unknown actual death toll. The most recent comprehensive assessment of drowning incidents nationwide was conducted in 2016. As per the Bangladesh Health and Injury Survey, an alarming statistic emerges, revealing that on a daily basis, 30 children under the age of 5 succumb to drowning. Extrapolating this figure, the annual toll reaches a minimum of 11 thousand. A particularly distressing aspect of this issue is the observation that 80% of child drowning fatalities transpire within a mere 20 yards of their residences. According to another news published on 28th Dec 2023 in a local newspaper of Bogura mentions the death of a youth named Riffat Khan (28). According to the news, he has committed suicide by hanging himself with his own scarf around his neck. His body was found hanging from a eucalyptus tree with a scarf tied around his neck. The police administration informed that since there were no complaints from the family, the body was buried without any investigation. The family claimed that Riffat was mentally unstable and used to work as a day laborer in other people's agricultural fields. They had no complaint regarding his death. A piece of news published on the 15th of January 2024 in the 'bijoybangla' news portal mentions that a young man named Mohon Mandal (18) from Sherpur, Bogura, has committed suicide by consuming gas tablets. He was taken to the hospital on Monday (January 15) early in the morning but passed away on the way. His father stated that he was mentally unstable and did not interact much with people. According to a police report from Sherpur Police Station, Bogura, a girl named Jasmine Akhtar (14) committed suicide by hanging herself with a rope around her neck, along with a bamboo stick, between 9:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on January 22, 2024, in a mentally unstable condition. The deceased father has claimed to the local news portal representative that she was mentally unstable and used to cause many problems.

Dupchachia Upazila's health complex report of October 2023 mentions about 37 suicide attempts by poisoning and 2 suicide cases by hanging. There have been around 15 suicide attempts in Dupchachia in September 2023. Among the 15 attempts, 9 people were under the age of 30 and from them, 5 people were aged between 20 to 15 years; according to a

police complaint submitted to the Dupchachia police station, a divorcee named Mila Akhter, aged 22, committed suicide on 22/10/23. Her mother has claimed that she might have committed suicide out of spite. Another story published in a local newspaper mentions the incidents of suicide in Dupchachia, Beragram village, where an 18-year-old named Farzana Khatun committed suicide at the house of her parents. She had been married for seven months and was at the time with her parents, paying them a visit. The family members claimed that she had a mental illness at the time. According to a similar local newspaper, an article published on 21st December 2023 mentions about a suicide incident of a businessman named Saiful Islam, aged 28. He is reported to be a businessman who faced huge economic losses recently and was under a lot of debt. The neighbors have identified the issue of pressure from the creditors that might have led to the incident.

With the incidents still on the rise, it is a concern that the study tends to understand from the people's point of view on how they perceive the situation at hand. The data collected were on the perceptions of the common people to draw an understanding of whether the situation is yet to be in the attention of the people of the community or not, contacting with many stakeholders in a community. The proposed research aims to address this gap by adopting a socio-economic theoretical framework, which will inform the development of an academic policy paper. This holistic approach is essential for shaping the demographic landscape of Bangladesh in alignment with the goals of Smart Bangladesh 2041.

4. Survey Findings

Data collected from 260 respondents from Dupchachia, Kahalu, and Shariakandi on the perception and aspects of unnatural death of young adults or people under the age of 30 are as follows:

The age of the unnatural deaths for the study, by default, looks at the deceased who are under the age of 30. The death patterns observed in the study through public observations are also mostly concentrated towards unnatural deaths. Thus, the variation in the age range is not covered under the scope of the study but rather emphasizes the events and reasons behind the deaths. Upon questioning the participants about the ratio of males and females in the death incidents, they have replied that women and girls are mostly subject to unnatural deaths. Gender dimensions in the deaths are also subject to the associated events. Thus, it is quite clear that understanding the reasons behind the deaths is more important to addressing the issue of unnatural deaths among young adults. The participants claimed that in the last one year, the reasons for unnatural deaths are suicide, road accidents, drug addiction, sickness, murder, affair, drowning, and family feud.

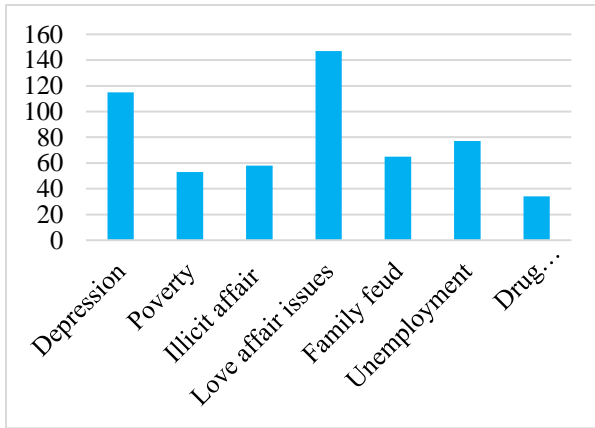


Fig. 1 Reasons behind the death of people under the age of 30

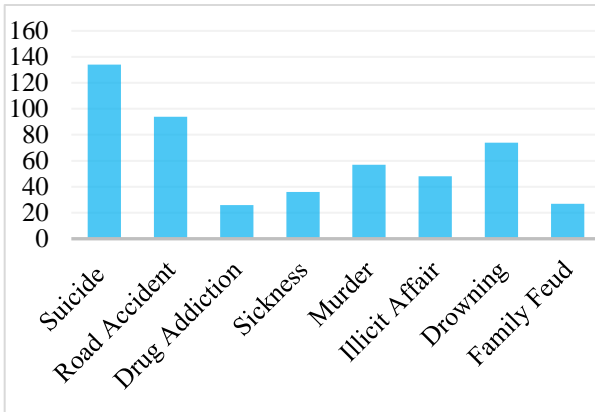


Fig. 2 Reasons behind the suicide of people under the age of 30

If ranked according to the claims and the previously mentioned data from the daily newspapers, it is evident that suicide is the most noted case of death for the population of the age range under 30. The respondents have claimed that young adults are more prone to suicide. Suicide incidents, however, add a significant detail to the study. The incident in itself is a catalyst for addressing many other issues, as suicide incidents are influenced by many factors. The respondents have identified and mentioned some key factors that led to suicide, such as depression, poverty, illicit post-marital affairs, relationship/love affair issues, family feuds, unemployment, drug addiction, etc. These are the most mentioned reasons behind suicide as perceived or observed by the people of the community.

There are also some particular issues mentioned as reasons for suicide, such as eve teasing, bad institutional results leading to suicide, dowry, lack of moral education, misunderstanding, uncontrolled emotions, lack of religious practice, social degradation, mental pressure from the parents, mobile addiction, impatience, child marriage, lack of awareness, reluctance from family, false accusation, cyberbullying, bad companion, unfulfillment of demands, Marital discord, debt pressure, illiteracy, and vagabond life. The catalysts identified are varied in nature. Such as eve teasing of a girl or woman can lead to mental stress and

demotivation the individuals to actually seek escape from the situation through suicide (Gadekar, 2016). It is also related to the social structure of how the male and female youths are being monitored and nurtured with proper ethical education that can develop their considerations and actions. Knowledgeable parenting is also an issue that can be looked into to further understand the matter to address the issues of suicide due to eve teasing and sexual harassment. Another reason identified is the sudden shock of getting bad grades in exams. This can be traced back to mental stress and family relations. Relating to it, reluctance from the family due to not being able to meet their expectations and mental pressure from the parents have been observed to have led to suicide by the young adults. For the female victims, early marriage and dowry have also been observed to have led to suicide. Mostly, maltreatment by the in-laws leads to the victim's desperation and results in suicide (Gardner, 2024). Marital discord and family feuds can be related to the same scenario. Lack of religious practice and social degradation are more of a claim by the society than concrete evidence for actually compelling someone to commit suicide; however, it can be considered as a catalyst as apprehended by the people of the community. Mobile addiction and cyberbullying are a claim that is a considerable issue in the present era of digitization. The need for a mobile or digital device cannot be avoided, but to what extent it can impact young minds needs to be understood. Mobile addiction, in particular as reason, can be linked to the unfulfillment of a demand where parents might prohibit their children from using phones, and the anxiety of the youths compels them to commit suicide at the whim of the moment in mental distress. Unfulfillment of demands, however, can be of many things that actually result in the aggression of the young adults and the mental dilemma and instability, identified by the participants as impatience, can cause them to make self-harming decisions such as suicide. As observed by the participants, false accusation is another trigger for suicide for the youths as they can cause defamation of the individuals, leading to immense societal pressure and mental stress. As a cause of suicide, debt pressure is a scenario where the suicide victim has too much debt in their name, which causes them to commit suicide in mental distress.

Taking a deep dive into the matter of suicide, the study thematically identified a few triggers and then collected public opinions on the matter. Such as;

4.1. Racial Profiling

There are different types of people living in the rural community and not all bear the same social identity. The social identity aspect is again differentiated into many classes, races, and religions. This aspect of racial, caste, and religious identity intends to face discrimination and prejudice in many instances (Mandal, 2007). Now, when it comes to this type of discrimination, whether they can trigger events like suicide is a concern and to what extent it may influence the untimely death catalysts is a matter that requires further attention. From

the survey, 83.46% of the participants believe that racial discrimination and caste prejudice at present are not the major reasons behind suicide. On the other hand, there is still 16.54 % of the participants who feel that the racial and caste discrimination aspect should not be taken lightly. They found the issues to be linked with suicide and identified the issues as probable reasons or triggers for suicide.

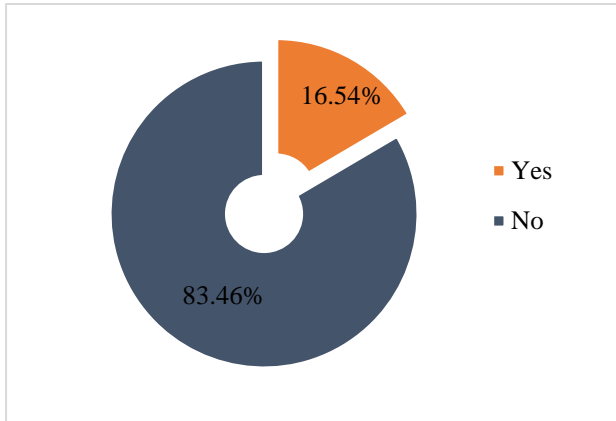


Fig. 3 Perception of suicide reasons/triggers such as racial discrimination and prejudice

4.2. Social Media and Cyberbullying

The observations from the participants have also brought up issues like the impact of social media as a trigger of an increase in the risk factor of untimely and unnatural deaths of young adults. The availability of digital devices and accessibility of social media has exposed the population to certain types of negative impacts, such as cyberbullying.

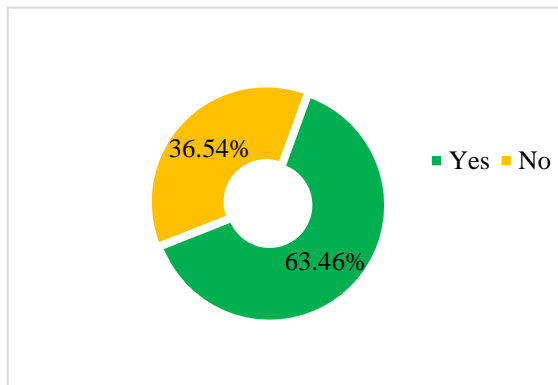


Fig. 4 Perception of the impact of social media on suicide

Physical bullying is also a considerable aspect. 63.46% of the participants have identified that the use of social media has its own toll on the lives of the population along has the potential to increase the tendency of suicide among young adults. Relating to the overuse of social media, the concept of cyberbullying has also been highlighted as a major trigger in compelling young minds to be derailed in making self-harming decisions. 36.54% of the participants, however, are not convinced about the issue and differ from the others on this matter.

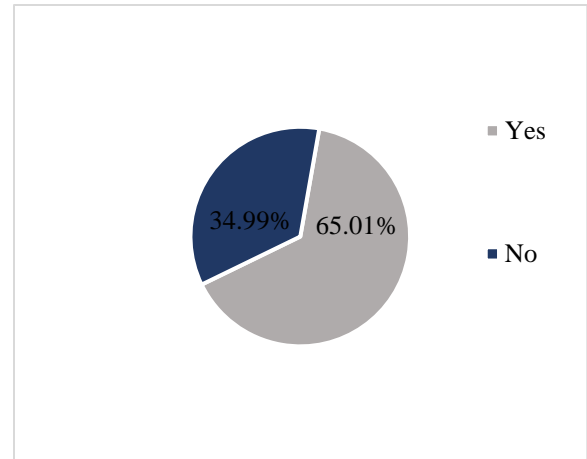


Fig. 5 Perception of the impact of personal information hacking and defamation on suicide

Those who are concerned about the impact of social media also have emphasized the issue of information hacking. They believe that suicide due to personal information going viral through hackers is a matter of great concern. 65.01% of the participants find the matter to be directly acting as a trigger for the suicides that have been happening related to the negative impact of social media. At the same time, 34.99% of the participants expressed their opinion more against the idea. They do not find the trigger to be related to the reasons for suicide or a direct reason for suicide.

4.3. Child Marriage and Dowry

The most recurring issue in the study is child marriage and dowry. The underage marriage system compels young girls to be married off to a family at a very early age. Their underdeveloped minds compel them to commit suicide if their in-laws are hostile towards them (Biswas, Khan, & Kabir, 2019).

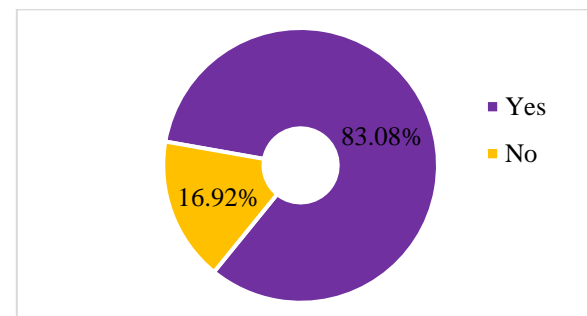


Fig. 6 Perception of the impact of child marriage and dowry on suicide

While in most cases, the matter of dowry has been the main reason behind the marital feud and violence that has led to the suffering of the young girls. The mental pressure and physical violence that follows mostly causes the victims to commit suicide (Naved & Akhtar, 2008). The majority (83.08%) of the participants have testified that the child marriage and dowry issue is one of the major reasons behind the suicide of the female population under the age of 30 years.

4.4. Digital Contents

The cable network is a vastly used entertainment medium. These entertainment sources can often become an addiction (Hartogsohn & Vudka, 2023).

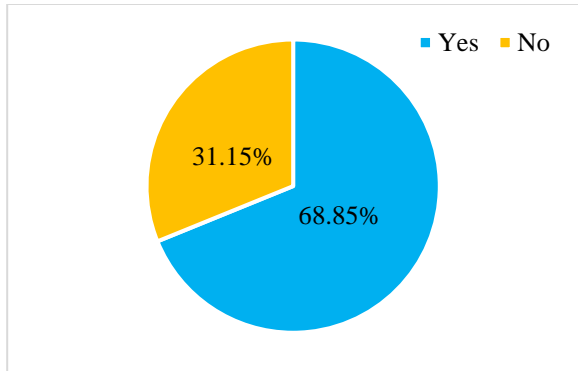


Fig. 7 Perception of the impact of digital content on suicide

Around 68.85% of the participants believe that addiction towards a particular program aired on cable networks can impact the minds of the watchers and contribute to the increase in suicide. This gives rise to the need for an in-depth understanding of the issue. The content analysis and monitoring, along with further research on the content trends and watchers' choice need to be studied to draw a clearer picture of the scenario of impacts that the contents might have on its watchers.

4.5. Unemployment

This is a matter that not only has been identified as the direct reason for suicide but also triggers for other reasons and is interconnected with many other reasons. As identified by the survey, the unemployment issue is connected to poverty, depression, drug addiction, suicide, etc.

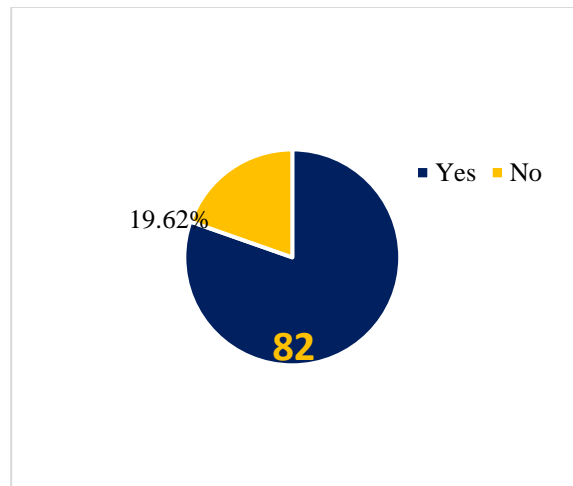


Fig. 8 Perception of the connection between unemployment and suicide

The majority (80.38%) of the participants believe that unemployment and suicide are connected very closely. Unemployment as a trigger can instigate many events that may

ultimately lead to any individual making self-harming decisions.

4.6. Blackmailing

This issue is mostly connected to digitalization. The use of social media and communication devices has a role in it. The individuals are exposed to many harmful contents and are victims of blackmailing due to the overwhelming reach of digital interfaces. One can easily access the details of another through social media, and the present use of AI has enabled the perpetrators to actually generate false evidence easily to put someone in a corner and easily extort from them. The issue can be observed from two ends; one being the impact of digitalization and social media, the other being the level of digital literacy and awareness among the users.

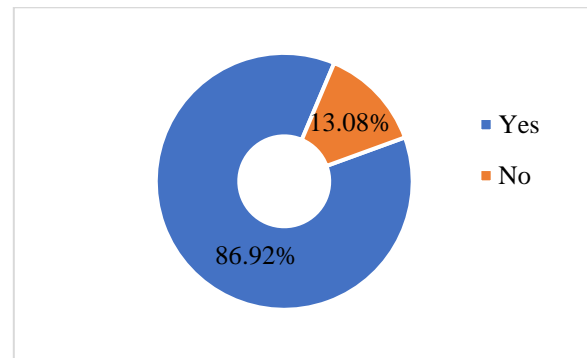


Fig. 9 Perception of the impact of blackmailing on suicide

That being said, 86.92% of the respondents believe that this digital crime and blackmailing has increased the number of suicides among the population under the age of 30. This issue needs to be delved into very deeply and needs attention. The victims of blackmailing are gender neutral; however, there may be a higher rate of female victims than male, and the suicide tendency among the genders needs to be studied more rigorously.

4.7. Unfulfillment of Demands

Around 89.62% of the participants of the survey have identified that unheard or unmet demands of young adults by their families lead to the suicide of individuals.

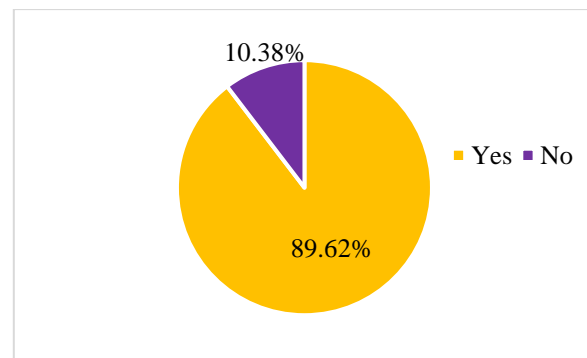


Fig. 10 Perception of Unfulfillment of demands leading to suicide

This is an alarming issue. The understanding process of the young minds needs to be studied and monitored to identify what actually is triggering the matter of self-harm among the individuals. Their behavior patterns need to be understood. Along with this, the families’ understanding of the situation needs to be studied to see how they manage the scenario and what actually goes wrong.

Identifying what instigates or triggers suicide can actually contribute to lessening the number of suicides by alleviating the trigger points. The major reason behind untimely death in the study area is suicide requires a deep dive into the issue from different dimensions. However, the limited time and resources have put constraints on the level of data exposure and coverage. It is necessary to conduct a more rigorous and in-depth understanding of the scenario. After suicide, the second most claimed reason behind untimely death is road accidents. In the survey, it has been brought up that the deaths caused by road accidents are mostly an outcome of reckless driving. This can be described from two ends where: one is that the young adults are the victims or they have been directly involved. Issues like not having a license and non-compliance with the law are also identified as reasons for road accidents. These can be considered as triggers that actually lead to road accidents. Also, reasons identified through the survey, like unpaved roads, high speed, not wearing a helmet, drug addiction, unskilled drivers, risky overtaking, depression, illiteracy, lack of awareness, etc., are catalysts of road accidents. This issue of untimely death due to road accidents can be a reflection of how aware the targeted population is and how well the society is in managing the system that can ensure the well-being of the population of the community.

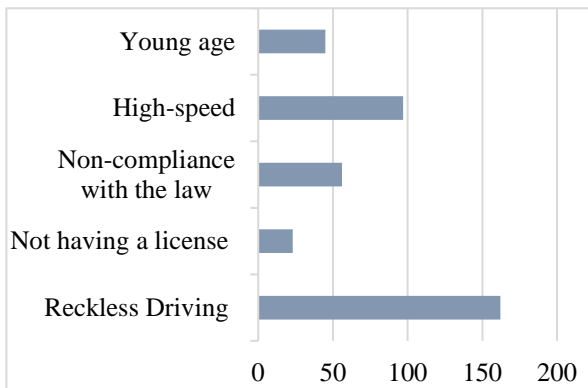


Fig. 11 Mostly observed reasons behind road accidents

While talking about the issue of road accidents, the participants mentioned the issue of bike accidents. The participants have claimed that the young adult and youth’s access to motor vehicles such as bikes have a major impact on the increase in deaths by road accidents. As claimed by the people, the reasons behind death from bike accidents are mostly similar to the reasons for road accidents. Though here, the major issue claimed is the age of the youths. Their easy access to a motorcycle and uncontrolled monitoring leads to

their untimely demise. The servation of the participants summarizes the issue that the age range of the youths and young adults coupled with the lack of awareness results in the deaths of the young souls.

In making an understanding of these catalysts, an issue that has been rising very often is drug addiction. The issue itself has been identified as the reason for death among the population under the age of 30. However, it is also acting as a catalyst for stirring up other events like suicide and road accidents. The majority of the respondents identified drug addiction as a trigger for many occurrences. It can be related with starting from self-harm to mental degradation of an individual where one can cause harm to others as well. Anxiety, depression, family feuds, marital conflict, etc., have been brought up by the survey that can also be linked to the issue of drug addiction.

Upon the query of what actually might cause young adults to become drug addicts brought up reasons such as depression, family feuds, bad companions, unemployment, love/relationship, illicit affairs, poverty, misuse of mobile, lack of proper enforcement of law, lack of family/religious discipline, chaotic lifestyle, easy access or availability of drugs, lack of awareness, curiosity, power abuse, lack of moral education, illiteracy, lack of curriculum activities, reluctance of the guardians, lack of harsh punishment for drug abuse, and misuse of technology.

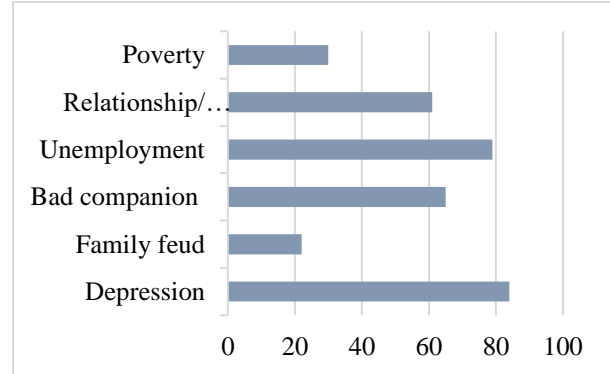


Fig. 12 Mostly observed reasons behind drug addiction

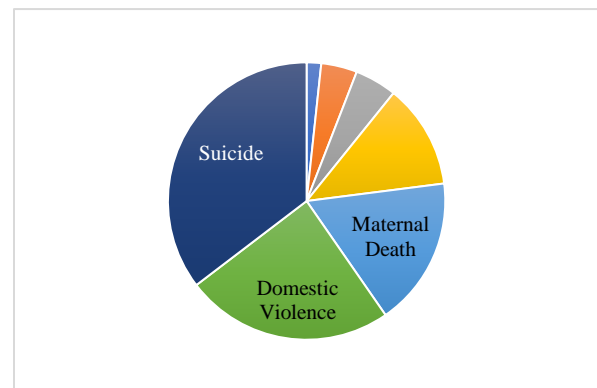


Fig. 13 Reasons behind unnatural/untimely death of women under the age of 30

Now, while looking into the reasons for the death of the population under the age of 30, considering the gender dimension factor can prove to be a very important aspect in addressing the issue. The reasons for death like suicide, family feud, dowry, love/illicit affair, maternal death, child/underage marriage, etc., are very close determinants of identifying females under the age of 30 as more vulnerable than their male counterparts. From physical to mental health risks, they are exposed to most of the catalysts of harm. Upon trying to identify the cause behind the death of women under the age of 30, the study brought up reasons such as marital discord, relationship/illicit affair, physical and emotional abuse, suicide, death while giving birth, child marriage, moral degradation, emotions during puberty, violence, family feud, poverty, marital feud, premature motherhood, dowry, depression, suicide, disease, sexual harassment, drug-addicted husbands, divorce and extramarital affair, and misuse of mobile phone. The participants have identified love-related issues, marital feuds, early marriage, maternal death, disease, eve teasing, and depression as major causes of the untimely death of women under the age of 30. The aforementioned reasons are either reasons themselves or triggers that actually lead to the demise of the particular population. The most recurring issue of marital and family feuds has been related to all the reasons for untimely death identified till now. It is also acting as a trigger. The family or personal feuds cause mental distress to the victims, leading to a self-harming event like suicide. In many cases, the in-laws might cause the demise of the victims. Both scenarios are outcomes of feuds. Now the feuds can occur from issues like dowry. The wife's family not being able to pay up the promised amount of dowry or the husband's family demanding such instigates the feuds. The mental trauma and physical torture that the women face lead them to make self-harming decisions or are murdered by their in-laws (Nipa et al., 2024). The matter of child marriage also causes untimely deaths while giving birth. Maternal deaths are mostly observed in premature mothers who are married off at an early age or are underage and face physical complications while giving birth (Widowati et al., 2024). Depression and eve teasing have been identified as smaller portions, but these are interlinked as well. The love-related issues or illicit affairs claimed by the participants are a major portion of the trigger that causes events like untimely deaths. The triggers mostly indicate reasons for suicide, anxiety, depression, moral degradation, murder, mental and physical health risks, etc.

Going beyond the physical and mental issues regarding reasons or triggers of untimely deaths, poverty has been observed to have been a trigger for many incidents. The aspect of poverty is covered under the economic condition of the people of the society. Anxiety, depression, unemployment, debts, etc., can be linked to the economic aspect leading to or relating to poverty. The survey, in particular, has identified the 'Dadon/loan business' as a catalyst that has been contributing to the worsening of the economic conditions of the rural people of the study area and impacting their livelihood,

leading to many untimely deaths. The business is a process of lending money in advance of work with something such as a mortgage. The victims till now of the community, due to poverty, are compelled to take loans from businesses. When they are unable to pay up the promised amount they are pushed into more poverty. It becomes like a cycle. Those who are unable to cope with the mental pressure are seen to have committed suicide or eloped from the area where they reside. Through the business, the poor have easy access to money, and instant money for need motivates them to take more from the businessman and syndicate. Unemployment and illiteracy also fuels the need of the poor actually to seek help by taking loans and jeopardizing their life.

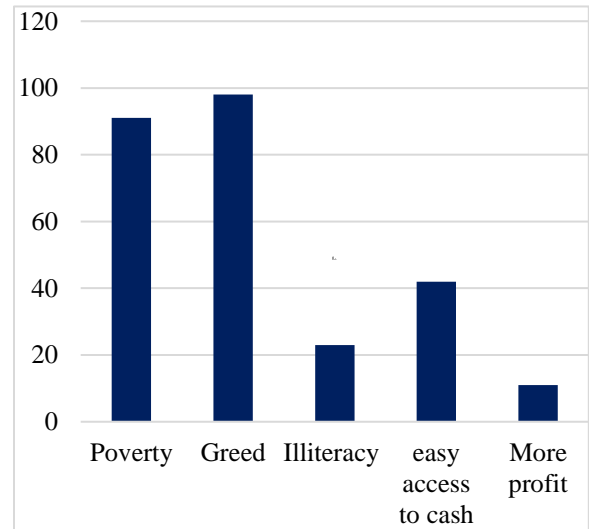


Fig. 14 Reasons behind Dadon/Loan business with a high-interest rate in local area.

It has also been observed in the study that people who are engaged in activities like gambling, drug addiction, etc., are more prone to taking loans, keeping the business alive. The more they are in debt, the more they seek loans. The people in debt are also mentally stressed with the burden of returning the money, which eventually makes them cause trouble in their households and families, resulting in family feuds. The participants have claimed that the stress of not being able to return the loan sometimes compels individuals in debt to commit suicide. But poverty, ultimately coupled with greed for money, unemployment, easy access and availability of cash, illiteracy and more profit for the businessman, is keeping the cycle alive by impacting the lives of the people of the rural community with a distinctive impact on the untimely death of the population under the age of 30.

5. Conclusion and the Way Forward

According to the demography, the people of the community are mostly farmers. The expert opinion collected through the survey identified that the admission rate in educational institutions in the study area is around 80%. The youth are well involved with education. Among these demographics, the participants have claimed that there have

been at least around 50 death cases reported in the last two years (2022-2023), only of the people under the age of 30 years. In the events however, the death ratio observed by the participants in consideration of gender, male and female, is almost equal.

Regarding this issue of unnatural or untimely deaths of youths, the community people are introduced to awareness programs for suicide prevention only. These programs are organized by public or private authorities. Though, according to the respondents, the frequency of the program is very inconsistent. Many people have forgotten when the last program was even held. Some have claimed that the program occurs suddenly and once in a while. Despite the lack of concern from a more wholistic ground, the majority (96.15%) of the respondents think it is necessary to investigate the death or investigate the cause of death of people under 30 years of age. Among the participants, around 36.15% of the people are dissatisfied with the efforts from the government side to identify the reasons behind the unnatural deaths. They feel that the effort from the family or the government to investigate the cause of death of young people under 30 years of age can be more rigorous.

In many cases, from the family side, the reasons are neglected, and no further investigation is conducted to avoid the hassle of the complicated process of the law. Following the limitations, as advice on how to investigate the cause of death of youth under 30 years of age, the respondents started by highlighting the importance of initiative from the individual level. Awareness raising through individual efforts and giving proper concentration to the issue can be the very first step in addressing the concern. Then comes the incorporation of government bodies. Administrative efforts can bridge a strong boundary of effort to imply that the factor of investigation is a major need for preventing future similar events. Through government effort, it can be made into a practice to identify the need for investigation of unnatural deaths, especially when it comes to youths. Social awareness raising through the involvement of non-government parties, social enterprises, government bodies, and community level organizations is a must. These collaborative efforts can emphasize the need for investigation of the deaths of young adults under the age of 30 years. Now, when it comes to preventing the death rate of this particular population, it is very important actually to identify the reason behind the deaths. This is the main objective of this paper, to actually manifest food for thought that the main way of preventing the events is to actually identify the reason or triggers behind

those events whilst concentrating on the issue. From the respondents, some suggestions have been brought up that emphasize collaborative efforts from government and non-government organizations to raise awareness. It is observed throughout the study that society lacks awareness of the gravity of the issue.

Along with this, the suggestions from the survey include counselling with the families and youths, keeping family ties intact, limiting the use of digital communication devices, providing working opportunities for the youths, adhering to religious rules, emphasizing higher education, including the issue in the study curriculum, organizing meetings and awareness raising workshops in the society and educational institutions, providing technical training to the youths for creating employment and capacity building, eradicating unemployment, abolishing child labor, stopping child marriage and dowry, proper monitoring to save the children from drug addiction, coming out of the old social prejudices, etc. It is possible to eradicate the problem upon identification of its triggers or origins and closing off all the choke points. To address the issue of untimely deaths, it is necessary to identify the reasons behind those deaths and rigorously screen through the issue to identify all the dimensions related to it. This will enable the community to create precautions for avoiding such farther incidents with their youths and population under the age of 30 years.

Conflicts of Interest

We wish to affirm that this project and the study associated with it are devoid of any conflicts of interest.

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