

Study of Suicide and Suicide Attempt Cases in Gahkuch, Gilgit-Baltistan.



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CERTIFICATE

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Abstract

Keeping in view the high suicide trends, it is important to dig deep as to see what causes these behaviors to surface. Furthermore, epidemiological researches have also established that suicide attempt is associated with increased risk of future attempt or even ultimately committing suicide. Which, moreover, have suggested that studying the suicide attempt cases can actually be helpful towards preventing this act in the future. Despite all the high suicide rates in Gilgit-Baltistan, there is no well-established researches done on suicide attempt cases but in this qualitative research suicide attempts were also interrogated about their experiences following an attempt beside the suicide cases. This research reports on qualitative research study aimed to identify the various factors of suicide and suicide attempts in Gahkuch, Gilgit-Baltistan, also simultaneously addressing the issue of suicidal thoughts and behaviors existing in an individual. Also important objective of this research was to analyze the response/behavior of the people around the victim e.g. their family, neighbors and other loved ones. This research briefly explains the role of the loved ones around the suicidal person and how important role does they play in overcoming these issues. Considering the current dire situation of Gilgit-Baltistan and specifically of Gahkuch, in order to gather useful material regarding suicide and suicide attempt cases, interviews were arranged with the attempters themselves as well as with the family, friends and other loved ones of the deceased person. A total of 13 cases have been studied for this research where 7 victims were deceased and 6 cases were those of suicide attempters. Findings in accordance to the suicide and suicide attempt cases suggest that depression and anger, insecurity and sense of comparison, educational pressure, early marriage, gap between parents and the child and no educational attainment all at, have led the victims to take the self-damaging step. Moreover, the movement of suicide attempters from being weak and vulnerable to becoming in control of oneself with the sense of agency was due to the revamped relational ties with the family and their constant support. Another aspect being getting indulged in some form of work or activity and hence reinforcement of positive attributes into one's life. Examining the interactions of the victims with the family were also a significant aspect of this research, where unrelenting support and good communication between the two proved to be of major importance. While it was identified that distant and detached relationships can further breed the horrors of suicidal predicaments, also the required recommendations are also presented here, even though acknowledging the limitations of the study.

Keywords: Gahkuch, Suicide, Suicide Attempt

Table of Contents

Abstract..... i

Chapter 1..... 1

1. Introduction..... 1

 1.1. Statement of the problem 4

 1.2. Research Problem 5

 1.2.1. Research Questions..... 5

 1.2.2. Objectives of this research..... 5

 1.2.3. Explanation of the Key Terms 5

Chapter 2..... 8

2. Review of literature..... 8

 2.1 Possible Triggering Points 9

 2.2 Suicide Attempts 11

 2.3 Gender Paradox in Suicide..... 13

 2.4 Conceptual Framework 14

Chapter 3..... 17

3 Research Method and Methodology 17

 3.1. Units of Data Collection 17

 3.2. Research Methods 18

 3.2.1. Key Informant 18

 3.2.2. Rapport Building..... 18

 3.2.3. Interviews..... 19

 3.3. Sampling 20

 3.4. Transcription and Data Analysis..... 20

 3.5. Locale..... 21

Chapter 4..... 24

3 Results and Discussions 24

 4.1. Case 1..... 24

 4.2. Case 2..... 27

 4.3. Case 3..... 31

 4.4. Case 4..... 35

 4.5. Case 5..... 38

 4.6. Case 6..... 41

Study of Suicide and Attempted Suicide Cases from Gahkuch, Gilgit-Baltistan

4.7. Case 7..... 43
4.8. Case 8..... 45
4.9. Case 9..... 48
4.10. Case 10..... 53
4.11. Case 11..... 56
4.12. Case 12..... 59
4.13. Case 13..... 62
4.14. Main Findings 64
 4.14.1 No Education vs Educational Pressure 65
 4.14.2 Early Marriage 66
 4.14.3 Parenting: To be Friendly or not to be Friendly..... 67
 4.14.4 Depression and Anger..... 68
 4.14.5 Insecurity and a Sense of Comparison..... 69
 4.14.6 Suicidal Behavior and Thoughts 69
 4.14.7 Response and Behavior of the Society..... 71
Chapter 5..... 74
5 Conclusion and Recommendations 74
Acronym 78
Glossary 79
Annexure-1 80
References..... 84

Chapter 1

1. Introduction

Before going on any further it is important to discuss the complex issue of terminology in the arena of suicide studies. This will be followed by a brief analysis of the suicide rates and the risk factors of the suicide attempts particularly focusing on Gahkuch Pakistan as the location for the current study. Being examined for many decades now, the clinical and research work being done on suicide related actions and ideation still has many ambiguities related to defining the terminologies in this particular field. As there is no commonly established upon or widely accepted terminology for this field, for suicide there is general agreement on two vital features. First being the act of death to be self-inflicted and secondly there has to be some level of intent to die during the process (O'Carroll, et al., 1996). In the cases of fatal outcomes, how to determine the intent provokes the most discussion.

A proper conceptual clarity and consistent definition of suicide with a full overview is very important before advancing towards the field of prevention (Nock, 2014). Historically, the term suicide is derived from the Latin words *sui* meaning of oneself and *caedere* to kill, dating back to Sir Thomas Browne's historical account, *Religio Medici* (1642) (Nock, 2014). The definition of suicide has taken varied forms, some researchers define it as death due to impulsive violent act (Jaworski, 2014) others define it as a situation when stressors exceed current coping abilities of someone suffering from a mental health condition. Some even define it as an act or choice explicitly depending on the individual (Holmes & Holmes, 2005). Hence one can see suicide as a voluntary, intended and self-inflicted acts suggesting that the individual is purely responsible for the known outcome. This intent is what distinguishes suicide from the other kinds of dying and deaths (Jaworski, 2014). For this research, Emile Durkheim's definition will be considered throughout the thesis which is discussed in detail in the literature section.

There are been numerous studies under the umbrella of suicide but there seems to be a gap when it comes to the natural life course of the individual after a suicide attempt. Suicide attempt is basically when a person attempts to commit suicide but somehow survives. The United States Center for Disease Control currently defines suicide attempt as a potential self-harm to oneself, with some intent to die, as a result of an act (Nock, 2014). Despite being a phenomena which is under observation for decades by great sociologist and psychologist like Emile Durkheim and Norman Louis Farberow respectively, there is still no commonly agreed upon or widely adopted terminology. Much of this debate is concerned with the issue of intent to die, likewise, the other terms for this field e.g. failed suicide attempt, parasuicide, self-injurious behavior or nonfatal suicide attempt are all subject to debate among the researcher and clinician till date. But O'Carroll et al. (1996) has argued that it won't be possible to neglect and remove the term suicide attempt because it has not only been intuitively recognized but has also been widely used as well. For this research we will follow the definition of suicide attempt as given by Nock (2014).

This research has been conducted on the suicide attempters from the Gahkuch valley of Ghizer district as well, besides those who have ended their lives due to suicide. The Ghizer district of Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) in the past few years has been receiving a tremendous amount of suicide cases. A local newspaper has shared that in fourteen years' time frame, which is from 1996 to 2010, a total of 300 cases were registered in different police stations of Ghizer district (Times, 2014). And during the years of 2000 and 2004, 49 women ended the light of their lives, the people of Ghizer might be immune to this trend but in comparison to the other districts of Pakistan this figure is quite enormous (Khan, Ahmed, & Khan, 2009). The trend seems to be ever increasing and disturbingly not just that, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan Chapter, for only a single month of May 2017 recorded 10 cases of young suicidal victims (Dad, 2017). Alarmingly, the actual figures might be more than these since some cases might even be brushed under the carpet due to patriarchal ethos of the area.

According to Hawton and Catalan (1987), 1% of the people die of suicide just following the year of attempt making it vital to take into account the suicide attempters as well. So this research has aimed to highlight and identify the hidden reasons behind the growing trend of deliberately risking or even ending one's life. This will help to make future strategies and approaches accordingly to abolish this act from the roots, so that the risk of deaths can be minimized. Also of interest are the social and emotional life struggle that the suicidal victims go through, exploring the individual's vulnerability of further attempting suicide. And for the deceased cases family, friends and loved ones have been interviewed if the departed exhibited any such behaviors during their life time. Also focusing on their interpersonal relationship with family, friends, and loved ones.

Unfortunately there is very limited research being done on the period after a suicide attempt. Even when, as mentioned above as well, the level of risk is highest after an attempt (Owens, Horrocks, & House, 2002). This piece of research will open doors to more in depth and honest views on why such step had to be taken.

In regard to suicide attempt, Shneidman (1993) gives a widely acceptable notion that not every suicidal person wants to die, some take action to end their sufferings and hence not their living. So here the intent is not to die but to end the unbearable situation. In the 1950s and early 1960s more consideration was given to communicative aspect of suicide attempts. Likewise, the book 'The cry for help' by Farberow and Shneidman (1961) also acknowledges the same notion that suicide attempt was aimed merely to attract others for help to end their anguish suffering. The attempters see it as a way to convey ones feelings, consciously or unconsciously, towards others so that their pleas are heard. Also, Stengel (1970) in his publication adhered to the same notion that behind every suicide attempt there lies an element of plea for response, often referred towards God or 'fate'. This is often known as the appeal function of the suicide attempt.

Suicide rates change over time and the rates vary from country to country (Priebe & Nelli, 2010). Europe tends to have the highest number of suicide rates both for men and women (Bertolote &

Fleischmann, 2002). While Asia accounts for 60% of the total suicides that occur worldwide, the number of people affected by both suicide and attempted suicide each year, are said to be at least 60 million in Asia. In comparison with Europe and North America, despite these alarming rates, less attention has been given to Asia. The reasons for this under-emphasis can be given to lack of resources as well as to the many other priorities at hand (Hendin et al., 2008)

But the causes leading to suicide attempt and suicide remain poorly understood. Economic factors tend to play a major part in it, specifically when it comes to financial restraints due to unemployment. Other factors include mental illness, drug abuse, alcoholism, physical disability, chronic illness, emotional distress, conflicts, violence, sudden loss in life like loss of loved one, or any failure in life (Cheng, Chen, Chen, & Jenkins, 2000). But this phenomenon has also its roots attached to other more influential factors namely cultural and social economic status. The list further goes on to having a family history of suicide, history of child maltreating in the family, history of suicide attempts, feeling of being useless and loneliness, cultural and religious belief factors, poor health care amenities and also easy access to suicidal methods (Agerbo, Nordentoft, & Mortens, 2002)

Hence, the causes behind committing a suicide are many and multiple reasons can be found behind a single case as well. To find the reasons behind the act of taking ones owns life, intentionally, has been the objective of many researchers. Empirically, suicide is said to be a male phenomenon though there exists no lucid theory of gender in suicide. But this is because of statistics which show that more men kill themselves than women.

Considering the burden and growing rates of suicide, Pakistan still lacks behind in the research arena. Both suicide and suicide attempts are understudied subjects and apart from that, statistics regarding National Suicide are not compiled and neither are mortality statistics reported to the World Health Organization (Khan M. M., 1998). Being an Islamic country where suicide is considered a criminal offense, the rates tend to be ever increasing. In Islam, Allah (God) is the creator of life and He is the one who can take life of human beings. According to the Holy book Quran, Allah (God) has prohibited the destroying of life

“And do not kill yourselves. Surely, Allah is most merciful to you”¹

Even though the teachings of Islam are quite clear when it comes to the killing of oneself, it does not really show its sanctions regarding attempted suicides. Still, Pakistan like many other Islamic nations, has managed to design strict regulations when it comes to attempted suicides. But these punitive laws on the other hand has led to lower report rates and so many of suicides and attempted suicides go underdiagnosed.

According to the latest official population census² of 1998, Ghizer with a population of 121,278 (Khan, Ahmed, & Khan, 2009), tend to be the most vulnerable areas of Pakistan when it comes

¹ Surah Nisa 4:29

² Population Census of Gilgit-Baltistan for 2017 are not yet made public

to suicides. Moreover, due to its demographic positioning and backwardness, the area is not an easy access either, on top of that the region's cultural barriers may further limit the researchers to carry out in depth study. So there is a dire need of good researches and proper reporting of such incidences so that the situation can be controlled before aggravating any further. The situation is such that the rates seem to be ever increasing from the last few years. According to Dad (2014)'s research, there exists a clash between modernity and free space in the context of G-B. Here, the mind sets of people are more empowered due to modernity but there exists lack of space to celebrate that freedom. This modernity and empowerment is further aggravating the situation by bringing more competition to achieve materialistic and economic success, hence pressurizing the poor and under achievers. While Sher and Dinar (2015) in their study have also held responsible modernization, social competition and comparison to be the main culprits of the high female suicidal rates in Ghizer, G-B.

1.1. Statement of the problem

The phenomenon of suicide study is a challenging one. It is a puzzling situation for the scholars worldwide that what makes an individual to end their own life and what goes in their mind during that time. The suicide rates tend to be ever increasing at an alarming rate from the last few years in Gahkuch but the focus on the natural life course after the suicide attempts are unknown and even lack proper acknowledgement. Since this research is about suicide and attempted suicide we need to have some background as what does suicide mean and how is it (if in any way) different from attempted suicide. The youth especially, between the ages of 14 to 28 is under great influence of this catastrophe (Sher & Dinar, 2015). Almost every month the locals get to hear an attempt towards the act but still due to lack of research and literature, the prevailing situation could not be controlled. The consequences of suicide and even suicide attempts are very heartbreaking and overwhelming. A family loses one of its beloved, a friend loses a best mate and a child loses a parent. Overall, it is a loss of an important life and it is out of a rational persons knowledge as to why would anyone end their live with their own hands. Is it really the victim's faults or is it the society that deprived that person from living a joyful life? And to answer that it is becoming more and more imperative to dig deep into this phenomenon differentiating between the myths and the ground realities. The situation is such that not only the government organizations or the health sector the civil society needs to be active too. There's need to search the reasons as to why people nowadays are trying to end their lives by the age of only 13 or 14 when in the 1960's their average ages would soar above 90's. Even though the cases are registered at police stations but actual reasons of attempt are not recorded because of cultural and religious consequences. Khan (2007) has identified different methods of committing suicides in Gilgit-Baltistan such as jumping into river, gunshot, hanging, taking poison, fire arms and strangulating. This increasing trend of suicides has now become a public health problem for Pakistan and due to unavailability of official data on suicide the national rates on suicide are not known and hence not even reported to the World Health Organization (Khan, Mahmud, Karim, Zaman, & Prince, 2008). Many international developmental NGOs are working in the area besides the government sector, naming a few like Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN),

Aga Khan Rural and Support Programme (AKRSP), European Union (EU), Rupani Foundation and many others working to create jobs and develop the educational and health structures strong enough to enhance the living standards of every community resided. With so many organizations doing the best in their capacity to better the lives of the dwellers, it still seems not enough. Since there is no proper channeling of identifying the suicidal rates, the situation thus gets even more difficult to cater. Mainly local newspapers play an important role in collecting suicidal reports and incidences, which are provided by the police. Local NGO's and other organizations further use that newspaper information for their data, hence, police stations remain the primary source of information for such incidences in Pakistan (Khan & Hyder, 2006).

1.2. Research Problem

Apart from all the above mentioned geographic and cultural hurdles, this research has helped to explore not only the factors of suicide and attempted suicide cases in Gahkuch, but it has also highlighted the aftermaths of suicide attempts identifying further whether the person is still struggling with suicidality or is becoming less suicidal, hence obtaining a raw data for future research purposes. Likewise, for the suicide cases as well, this research has identified whether the victim before killing themselves had talked about suiciding, which has been asked from his family, friends or other close ones (Teachers, neighbours etc.). This study further has aimed to highlight the person's emotional life, exploring the relationship bondage with his or her family and friends and the way in which life unfolds during the year or years following the suicide attempt. I have operationalized my research problem into the following questions and objectives.

1.2.1. Research Questions

1. What are the factors of suicide and suicide attempt in Gahkuch?
2. Whether or not suicidal thoughts persisted after the first attempt and in case of suicide whether the deceased person showed any suicidal behavior or thoughts?
3. How loved ones, family or friends have reacted or responded towards the suicide attempter and in case of suicide how was their behavior towards the victim?

1.2.2. Objectives of this research

Considering the research questions the objectives of the research are hence, to

1. Find out the underlying factors of suicide and suicide attempts in Gahkuch.
2. Find out if the attempters are still experiencing suicide thoughts after the first attempt. And whether the victim, in case of suicide, had shown any such thoughts or behavior?
3. Study the reaction and response of the loved ones, family or friends towards the suicide attempter after the attempt and in case of suicide their general behavior towards the victim will be studied.

1.2.3. Explanation of the Key Terms

Suicide:

The World Health Organization defines suicide as the act of taking one's own life intentionally. It is becoming a major health problem nowadays in most of the countries, and a significant cause

of death too. Although suicide is a serious problem in developed countries, it is the low and middle income countries that tolerate the greater part of the global suicide burden. Usually suicide is considered as a disease and a personal problem. But it does not remain a personal problem when a larger part of society is facing it. Durkheim (1897) was the first French sociologist to study the suicide and its determinants. Further Durkheim has expressed four types of suicide in his book namely egoistic, altruistic, anomic and fatalistic suicide which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

Suicide Attempt:

As mentioned above suicide must have death as an outcome, whereas in the case of suicide attempt it actually has or believe to have the potential for death as an outcome but somehow manages to survive. Hence, suicide attempt is when a person attempts to commit suicide but somehow survives. O'Carroll, et al (1996) in their paper describes suicide attempt as an act where the persons explicitly or even implicitly intends to kill her or himself and throughout this research work as well their definition has been followed.

1.3. Significance of the Study

In recent years suicide has become a major health problem in many parts of Pakistan. Gilgit-Baltistan and especially Gahkuch is one of those places in the North where suicide has become a new trend now. Even with all the high-rise tendency towards the act, there still lacks informative and deep studied researches.

Not only because of this high inclination towards suicide but the reason to choose this topic is to find out the explanations behind this scandalous act. Which apparently seems to be some deep rooted problem in the social, cultural and economic fabric of Gilgit-Baltistan. Flavin & Radcliff (2009) explained the matter of suicide as a societal disease. They further added that when a level of suicide increases anywhere, it shows that the society is ill and it becomes a collective problem now, so it needs to be solved by a collective solution. Problems without being seriously identified and treated ripe into causes, which further can contribute in worsening the situation even more. As many studies have already revealed how easily a suicide attempt can forecast the future risk of another suicide attempt or even ultimate death by the act (Moscicki, 1995), suicide attempts needs the desired attention too, as it is equally perilous as suicide. The area under consideration lacks proper reporting or analysis of suicides let alone suicide attempts and no proper research has been done on the attempters either. By filling the gap, this piece of work aims to investigate the suicide and suicide attempts cases that have been taking place over the past few year.

And only through investigating these cases we can highlight those vulnerable demographic, social and economic causes due to which people of Gahkuch find it difficult to cope with life and consequently choose death over it. This exploration has further contributed by providing core

Study of Suicide and Attempted Suicide Cases from Gahkuch, Gilgit-Baltistan

elements which were previously unknown as no other can narrate sentiments or state any better than the suicide attempters themselves, which has also been studied along with the suicide cases.

Chapter 2

2. Review of literature

This part of my research will cover broader themes of suicide, suicide attempts and the relevant researches done under this umbrella. For this specific research narrative review technique is being used as this study is purely qualitative and descriptive in nature. Suicide has been the subject of numerous studies dating back to Emile Durkheim, who is usually being credited for being the first person to do a systematic study of suicide. So for this research's literature we will start from reviewing his work on suicidology. According to his definition of suicide,

“Suicide is applied to all cases of death resulting directly or indirectly from a positive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce this result”³

Durkheim's scientific work to study the influence of the socio-economic environment on suicidal behavior has been given great importance hence an author who advocated even non-psychiatric risk factors of suicide too. His theory was mainly centered with suicide as being a social phenomenon rather than an individual's suicidal state of mind, hence social connectedness or social bond were important when considering a person's response toward suicide ideation. On the other hand the philosophical influence of Plato cannot be ignored either. His objection on suicide says that,

“Human beings are the Gods possessions and risk punishment for daring to decide when to die”
(Lieberman, 2001)

But Plato later on changed his observance by stating that punishment should be avoided if the drive behind suicide was based on rationality (Novak, 1975). Saint Augustine also opposed the act of suicide by saying that it,

‘Violated the sixth commandment: thou shall not murder’

Even with all the social and religious sanctions people still tend to end their sufferings by committing suicides. After all there rises a question of who decides whether the act is rational or not. To them it's the only way to deal with the troubles in life but this may appear irrational to some while others argue that suicide is meaningfully related to economic factors hence the role of irrational decisions should not be exaggerated in human behaviors (Virén, 1999).

Carrying on further what Durkheim proposes, his work on suicide tries to find the social causes and environment e.g. religious beliefs, family, political society, occupations, etc. and not just personal or psychological elements. He basically delineates four types of suicides namely egoistic, fatalistic, altruistic and anomic suicide. Egoistic suicide arises when there's a weak social integration among the people living in a society, it's a feeling of isolation and vulnerability that derives a person into thinking that being dead instead is a better option than the prevailing situation. Suicide therefore has an inverse relationship with the degree of integration of the

³ Suicide a study in Sociology. P 44

religious, domestic, and political groups of which the individual forms a part. To put it in simpler words as society weakens or “disintegrates” the individual starts depending less on the group and more upon himself and on his personal interests. Durkheim has called this "excessive individualism" state egoism and due to which the resultant egoistic suicide (Jones, 1986).

As “excessive individualism” can lead to suicide, so does “insufficient individuation” according to Durkheim and hence altruistic suicide. As egoist sees himself useless or without purpose to which he could commit, altruist sees himself for a purpose of committing to a bigger goal which is beyond this world (Jones, 1986). Hence, fulfilling this feeling by taking his own life and considering it their “duty”. A good example of which can be found in the primitive times when a women would kill herself upon the death of their spouse or a servant upon the death of their masters and so altruistic suicide.

Anomic, the third type of suicide, as Durkheim says, occurs when a society fails to regulate and control their beliefs and behaviors. As he insists that there exists a relationship between a society’s suicide rate and the way the society carries out its functions. So whenever a society moves from its stable equilibrium position whether due to industrial or financial crises and even if it’s due to economic prosperity, both the “disturbances of equilibrium” leads to anomic suicides. The reason behind this being when a society is disturbed by some crises readjustments takes place and so some of its members are “reclassified” (Jones, 1986). Society who has a power to regulate over individuals needs and desire, weakens to be functional over this stage and without any constraints on humans needs and aspirations, the insatiable nature of humans never allows them to be happy, and hence the resultant type of self-inflicted death. Durkheim call this time period of failed moral constraints as anomie. So anomic suicides occur due to the way individuals are regulated by society as compared to egoistic and altruistic suicides, which depends on how society’s attached to them.

Lastly, the third type is fatalistic suicide, which is opposite to anomic suicide resulting from excessive regulations. It occurs when the individual feels or experiences physical or moral oppression, hence in other words attributable to despotism. Here individuals are afraid of their future considering it to be dark and hopeless, and their passion or lives being choked by the oppressive discipline. Examples of this can be slaves, very young husbands or childless mothers etc. considering themselves to be trapped in a situation and the only way out is by committing suicide. Thus, this brings us closer Durkheim’s viewpoint that social factors are of great importance too when studying the phenomenology of suicide.

2.1 Possible Triggering Points

Durkheim’s influential works has greatly impacted the current work available on suicide and many great research works are published revolving around the various aspects of suicide the current times are facing. It remains true that no one can know for certain the factors or reasons behind the suicides. There could be multiple reasons and only by joining the dots one can only make smart guesses and hence might be able to prove some correlations and connections. When

talking about the factors behind this extreme act of self-harm, they vary between different locations of a same county like, Cheong et al. (2012) identified the factors of suicide in rural areas and urban areas of Korea. The factors were identified under four categories which were public service, economic status, residential environment and the social integrity. They aimed to discover their influence on the suicide rates in both the rural and urban areas of Korea. The data was taken from statistics of Korea, for causes of death, from 2006-2008. So by using multiple-regression they analyzed that suicide rates were higher among men as compared to women in Korea, in rural areas as compared to urban areas and higher among old people as compared to young ones. It was also found from this research that suicide rates are related to the environment where we live, and economic status of the region.

Suicide now, after all the relevant researches, seems to be more than just a psychological catastrophe. Yuryev et al. (2011) assess the relationship between the different dimensions of economic and social factors with social exclusion and suicide mortality in Europe. A structured survey was conducted through random sampling, with closed ended questions having Likert scale. Through analyzing the data by equation modeling, it was found that suicide rates among male and female are negatively affected by the economic and social dimensions. And it was also found that social factor, that is welfare, influences suicide greater as compared to economic factor that is employment dimension, among female.

In another study to examine the association between economic factors and suicide, Nelli & Priebe (2011) more precisely has studied unemployment, which is considered to have a major influence. Data was collected from different national agencies like the European health for different years such as UK (1901-2006), US (1900-1997), France (1970-2004) and Italy (1970-2001). The results showed a long-run association between economic factors and suicide rates, hence proving to be a confounding factor when designing suicide prevention strategies.

Due to 1% increase in unemployment, suicide rate rose by 0.79 % among the persons younger than 65 years of age, again showing an association between employment changes and mortality rate. The results have also shown that rapid and huge rises in unemployment were associated with short-term rises in suicides in working-age men and women and in homicides (Stuckler et al., 2009). As during recessions, unemployment rates tends to rise and with the increased rate of unemployment, suicide rate also increases. Hence showing that suicide is related to recession too (Cheong et al., 2012).

Study done by Haw, Hawton, Gunnell and Platt (2015) also concluded that suicide is associated to economic recession because of the main triggering points behind this phenomena such as unemployment, financial loss and debt. Highlighting and encouraging policy makers to consider how best to reduce the impact of recessions on mental health and suicidal behavior.

Social isolation as a cause for suicide was also proved by the Lebret, Vaille, Mulliez, Gerbaud, and Jalenques (2006) in their study, where difficulties with loved ones and feeling of being isolated can lead to both suicide and suicide attempts.

Khan et al. (2008) talks about depression to be the main reason behind the suicide trends in Pakistan. Which is sadly going under-recognized as well as under-treated. Further highlighting concerns such as poor primary health care facilities let alone providing the mental health care facilities. Unless this problem is not adhered to, suicide prevention seems to be a blurry dream. Depression could also be the reason for the increasing trend of suicide in Gahkuch. As forty-six percent of women were found to be enduring depression in a chitral valley, which is similar to the mountainous areas in Ghizer (Mumford et al., 1996).

When considering the literature based on the studies done in G-B, unfortunately the content is very limited as there are fewer studies. In a study by Sher and Dinar (2014) they highlighted social and cultural issues mostly resulting in suicide in Ghizer, going further by explaining that psychological illness is not only reason to attempt suicide. It is beyond that. They conducted a case study to get results. A qualitative analysis was conducted through the mix method where the results showed that burdens of modernization, materialism, social competition and sense of comparison are the main reasons behind the suicide numbers of women in district Ghizer. Hence, creating a gap between the traditional and modern culture which has been witnessed as playing a role in raising this issue. And it is visible that the rural areas are more deprived as compared to the urban areas. People living in rural areas are more likely to commit suicide as compared to other parts of a country. It is because there is more poverty in rural areas and living conditions are very tough. And poverty is a cause all sort of health problems like depression, anxiety and suicide. Some of the other reasons for high rates of suicide in villages include a lack of access to the health services and these people have low income, easily availability of lethal means to suicide, and high number of people migrating from rural to urban areas (Judd, Cooper, Fraser, & Davis).

2.2 Suicide Attempts

Now coming towards the main subject of this thesis, suicide attempt is also a very alarming situation, adversely affecting not only the relatives or friends but the person also goes through a lot more. Epidemiological studies have even shown that suicide attempt increases the risk of further attempts or even suicide in the near future (Moscicki, 1995). Akbari et al. (2015) in their article have basically categorized Suicide behaviors starting with suicide ideation, planning it, attempting suicide and in extreme cases, completing suicide. Making a point that not every suicide attempt, for whatever the reason, is successful and some even after repeated attempts do not die. On the other hand many individuals lost their lives in the first chance without having any record of previous suicide attempts. Proposing that, underlying mental and emotional state at that specific time of act can only explain these varying outcomes between suicides and suicide attempts (Langlois & Morrison, 2002).

Such comparison between suicide and suicide attempts was also done by Gladstone et al. (2001). In their study, they found that those who committed suicide had to face more severe mental illness in their life course and were admitted more times to a psychiatric unit as compared to suicide attempters. Whereas in another study suicidal behavior was studied to be beyond and independent of the psychiatric reasons (Hollis, 1996).

This has raised, over the years, an acute question of whether the two groups can be merged or not. And as we see a few studies trying to differentiate the terms as well i.e. suicide and suicide attempt. For example Stengel (1970) and Farberow and Shneidman (1961) stirred a thought whether the two concepts can be merged together or are they two different phenomena with different population groups. Further deep study was done by Linehan (1986) and Beautrais (2001) looking specifically at serious suicide attempts and suicide itself. According to Beautrais's conclusion the population of both were overlapping, sharing common psychiatric history, diagnostic and social-economic history even despite the gender difference. The same study of Beautrais further asserts that even the risk factors between suicide and attempted suicide are mostly alike, hence consistent with the result of overlapping population. From the above discussion we can establish a view that suicide attempts should be given equal attention and the required concern as any suicide case would receive and therefore for prevention, understanding the phenomena beforehand is very crucial.

So whatever the reason behind suicide attempts, they cannot be neglected, as there are more chances of a successful suicide after an attempt. In fact they could be assessed through interviews to get to know the underlying reason behind such an act and plan preventive strategies accordingly. As in a study seventy-five suicide attempters were brought to the ward of Lund Suicide Research Center for a five year follow up study. Majority of the 13% of these patients had committed suicide during the first 2 years, 40% of the interviewed suicide attempters admitted to have reattempted within the 3 years of their first attempt. Patients of reattempts were of younger age group and with a history of poor social connections (Fridell, Ojehagen, & Bendz, 1996). So these results can be of great importance in future analysis and hence the suicide attempters, who can be of great prominence for researchers as a means to elicit more information about the reasons behind this act.

Many researches did find a variety of reasons behind suicide attempts. Goldman-Mellor, et al (2013) worked on suicide attempts among young people. They tested that whether the increasing rate of suicide among young people is due to poor health and social functioning or it's a psychiatric disorder. Structured interviews were arranged for selected participants, who were the members of Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development study. The findings show that due to expensive health and social benefits the young suicide attempters could not access these facilities and remained vulnerable because of the increasing global recession. Other reasons found for suicide attempts are lack of self-esteem (Choquet, Kovess, & Poutignat, 1993). Further explaining the mechanics behind it, Adams, et al (1995) finds a connection between low self-esteem, hopelessness, and higher depression levels with a history of suicide attempts. Emphasizing to work on evaluating self-esteem in adolescents and directing the required attention towards low self-esteem and therapies.

Likewise self-image has also proved to be the reason behind the Suicide Attempts among the Turkish adolescents, their results showed self-image to play a great role and even lead to suicide

if effected negatively by the family relations (Cetin, 2001). The results are in parallel to what Hollis (1996) studied that suicidal attempts are in close connection to poor family relation.

Taking a little different path, Borowsky, Mcmorris and Taliaferro (2013) studied the thinking and attempting of suicide among young people who are involved in verbal and social bullying. They identified the risk and protective factors which related to the suicide ideation and suicide attempt. In order to look into the factors data was gathered through a survey named Minnesota student survey. They found that 6.1% of students feel guilty for bullying, 9.6% of students became victims of bullying and 3.1% were both. Suicidal ideation and suicide attempt by perpetrators is 22%, 29% among victims and 38% among both bully and victim.

Poverty as an economic factors also plays an important role. In a study to find the causes of suicide in Turkey, Ozer, Serpil and Julian, (2009) found a positive relation between poverty and suicide rates through time series analysis. Their main objective was to see suicidal behavior among people who were not psychiatric patient but attempted suicide during the stressful situations due to economic crisis. As a result they found out that poverty is positively related to the suicide attempts.

2.3 Gender Paradox in Suicide

When talking about the weightage of gender behind this phenomena various researches show important role it plays in various suicidal behaviors like in suicide ideation, planning and likewise in suicide attempts. It has also been reported and even shown how gender effects the choice of method being adopted to kill oneself, it's risk tendency towards death and over all how it is manifested in the suicidal behavior.

A few researches have suggested that women tend to have a greater number under this category. As Langlois & Morrison (2002) in their study found that teenage girls tends to be admitted in hospitals due to suicide attempts and that's due to opting a less-lethal method. Whereas, when talking about suicide rates males tend to have outnumbered females in this category (WHO, 2014). And this gender difference in suicide is what referred to as "Gender Paradox in Suicide" which is an existent phenomenon and merely not something made (Canetto & Sakinofsky). In a US study, white men had the highest ratio as compared to white women when it comes to taking one's own life, 4:1 respectively. And the reason explained behind this trend was the male's inclination towards choosing more lethal tools, especially by picking firearms. While females usually take their lives by opting for poisoning and cutting themselves (Hyatt, 2010).

It is reasonably known that not all who attempt to kill themselves die in during their first attempt, many are left hospitalized might severely harming themselves but not dead. Likewise, some previous studies have shown that males are more likely to take their lives in the first attempt, due to the choice of more fatal means and hence death. Females, in comparison to that, were more likely to be hospitalized for attempted suicide cases (Langlois & Morrison, 2002).

When compared the gender difference in experiencing suicidal-ideation female's involvement is much stronger than males (Goncalves, Sequeirab, Duarte, & Freitasc, 2014). Similarly, in parallel to the results, Suicide Prevention Australia (2015) also hold women to experience higher rate of suicidal-ideation. Going further by elaborating how female's suicidal behaviour are involved more with non-fatal methods.

The propensity of cultural influences on the gender paradox of suicide also tends to play an imperative role and have also been taking into accounts too for preventive strategies. Proofs from US and Canada proposes that this gap can be seen widened as we move towards societies where according to the gender a diverse suicidal action is anticipated (Canetto & Sakinofsky).

Another study mentions that boys tend to be more planned while girls tend to be more impulsive and do not aim to die. Suggesting that impulse control especially among girls is very important because that brings them closer to attempting suicide, but nonetheless this study suggests that the gender differences cannot be explained easily and hence remains a very controversial point (Cetin, 2001).

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This research's conceptual theory has been designed through the literature studied for this topic. For this particular study my epistemological position as a researcher was interpretivists and my ontological position being a Social Constructivist. Epistemology is basically concerned with different ways of knowing as well as learning about the social world and is based on questions like how to know about the truth/reality and what is the basis of our knowledge? Whereas Ontology has to do with the nature of the social world and things that can be known about it (Ritchi & Lewis, 2003).

Wilhelm Diltthey in his writings has greatly emphasized on understanding as well as studying the lived experiences of people which takes place in a specific historical and social context. This exploration, he further stresses, would reveal the links between the social, cultural and historical facets of people's life and can see the context as well in which that particular action takes place. In simple words we can define 'interpretivism' as the school of thought that emphasizes how important interpretation as well as observation simultaneously is when understanding the social world (Ritchi & Lewis, 2003). Likewise for this study as well the inter-relatedness of the various aspects of the victim's livelihood like their psychological, social as well as historical factors were all important to realize for digging deep into the case. According to social constructivism human development is socially situated and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others.

Suicide and the related the behavior is a shocking experience not only for the families but for the whole society as well, consequently becoming a societal problem. So that's why taking into account more and more views from close people have been a priority. Scientifically speaking it is clear that the problem of suicide remains unsolved, neither psychopathology nor human's general knowledge or common understanding could elicit a proper solution (Zilboorg, 1936).

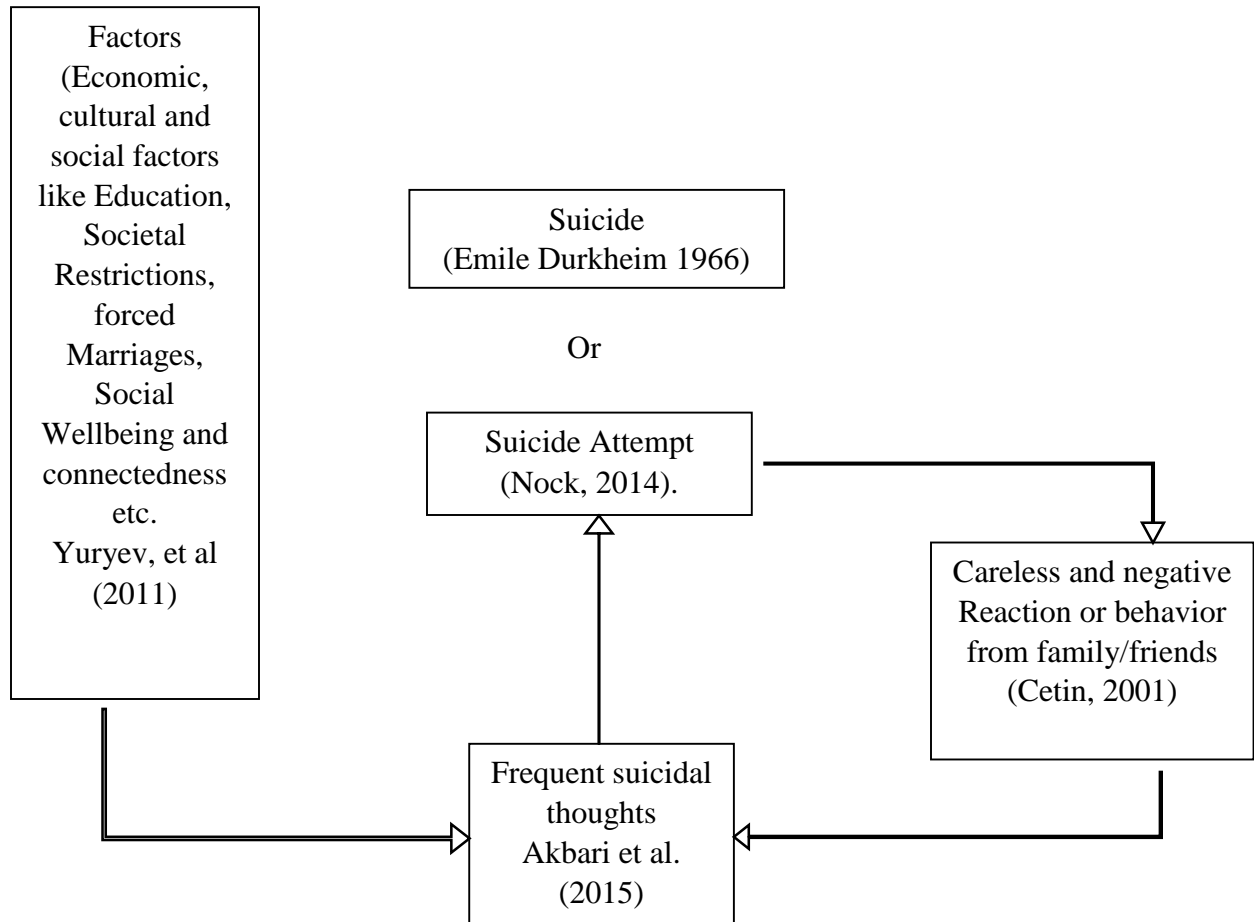
This research work in its tiniest capacity tries to encapsulate the gist of a heart wrenching act, spurred in the Gahkuch valley without trying to test any existing theory.

Considering the first question of this research, which is to find the various reason behind this act, various studies have shown similar commonalties between the causes of suicide and suicide attempts, particularly those attempts which has been proved serious medically (Beautrais, 2001). These reasons could be due to psychiatric explanations or due to other social causes as well explained meticulous by Durkheim (Jones, 1986). Other factors such as performing poor in studies or having a low work-related status can also lead to risking life by attempting suicide (Li, Page, Martin, & Taylor). Yuryev, et al (2011) also confirms to the notion that like numerous other mental health problems, suicide behavior can also be the resultant of many psychological, social and biological factors. Also considers the social factors to have a significant impact on the mental disorder, likewise according to a report on mental health, poor people, homeless and unemployed has the highest risk of suffering from mental disorders (Yuryev, et al., 2011). From the same study it seems that social stress has been acting like the backbone of any suicide related phenomenon. Social stress basically instigates from the non-availability of the required resources to achieve the desired goals or to maintain a balanced level of social functioning. Hence, the resultant can be due to unemployment, societal restrictions and inequality etc. which hinder with normal adaptive opportunities.

Akbari, et al (2015) categorises the suicide behaviors into suicide ideation and planning, before actually attempting it, and in worst scenarios this ideation and planning can even lead to completing a suicide. My second research question highlights whether the victims have been idealizing and portraying suicidal thoughts or actions more often. Suicidal ideation or the thought process can be defined as the thinking route towards considering or planning suicide (Choquet, Kovess, & Poutignat, 1993). My second research question very much shows how rational/irrational behavior the attempters think it was, and in case of suicide, if they tried to warn others before they actually committed suicide. Although many research works have established that the first attempt itself is a risk for a later suicide attempt (Moscicki, 1995) and as the number of suicide attempts increase so does the risk factor of future attempts or even subsequent suicide.

When shock after the first attempt slowly wears off, the attempter tends to feel grief and lost. Then comes the role of family, friends and the society in general. Although research has largely neglected such role, they can be of great importance when it comes to counseling and emotional support to prevent any further attempts. Likewise, the same roles can play a negative impact on the individual's life and hence further exacerbating the situation. Beside manipulative experiences, research has also proposed that a chaotic family environment with negative attributes also places an individual at a higher risk for attempting suicide or even commit suicide (Nock, 2014). This poor family functioning which also can include inter family conflicts lacking cohesiveness, bonding and lack of attachment with the individual can really out him/her in real danger psychologically and hence leading towards suicidal behaviors (Cetin, 2001).

Figure 1: A Diagrammatical Representation



Chapter 3

3 Research Method and Methodology

Research is basically a general principal which guides overall any research work. Fundamentally it studies your research topic and caters the need to look into constraints, dilemmas and ethical choices within ones research work. Across a variety of disciplines and contexts qualitative research has recently been the most widely established, accepted and an unprecedented approach. As Kothari (2004) says this approach can be used to identify the deeply rooted reasons, factors and even opinions as well about any underlying phenomena, hence collectively addressing the core issues. Furthermore, it allows researchers to get to know the insights by exploring how people structure and give meaning to their surroundings and living, making it easier for the researcher to learn how people make sense of themselves and others (Berg, 2001). Considering the research topic that is highly sensitive to conduct and even difficult to analyze and process the individual suicidal experiences, only qualitative research will make it easier to understand, describe and to explain this phenomena from the inside. And the research design used for this study is the descriptive case study research design, as it tends to explore and explain the way things are so in accordance with my research objectives, this study nature fits the best as the phenomena of suicide occurring in Gahkuch is to be described through answering the research questions. This research style has given more room to the particularities that this study required, making it easy to transform the complex scenarios into texts. For a thorough understanding of what is being researched, descriptive case study research design tends to be a leading choice and likewise for this qualitative study as well descriptive case study research design has been used. Also of important significance is to identify the case. Here, in this study the case is the phenomena of suicide and the suicide attempt, as the research tends to unlock the hidden perspective behind this act prevailing in Gahkuch.

On the other hand research methods differs from your research methodology, they are basically the tools that you use to collect, analyze and interpret data during the research study. The complexity in this phenomenon requires an in-depth study because the risk factors and causes of suicide and attempted suicide are subtle and deeply embedded in the roots of their life style. Furthermore, in order to thoroughly study and explore if there are any cultural and social aspects in these cases, the respondents will be cross-examined using the in-depth interview technique. This technique enables a researcher to see the concerned phenomena through unfolding multiple perspectives. But before taking into consideration any particular method is it always preferred to deeply scrutinize all the available options.

3.1. Units of Data Collection

Data collection units basically help your research in generating information that you require in order to answer your research questions and objectives. Likewise, in this case I will also be needing them, which will basically be the primary units of data collection

Since this study focuses on suicide attempts as well so the UDC-1 are the attempters themselves. As no other person, friend, family, relative what so ever, can answer my research questions any better than the suicide attempters themselves. UDC-2 are the members of the family of the deceased persons, which includes parents, siblings and cousins. Since, for the deceased persons only close people will better be able to answer the question about the deceased, hence the reason to choose this UDC. UDC-3 and 4 are the neighbors and teachers of the deceased respectively. These all have been interviewed in order to elicit the information. Following are the methods that I think best fitted with the type of qualitative research that I aimed to carry out and have been used for all the UDCs.

3.2. Research Methods

Following constitute the research methods of the current study.

3.2.1. Key Informant

When considering about doing a qualitative research and in order to get to know any complex phenomena in a society, we may require some ground realities from the inside to get to know a better picture of the area. So for this I needed a key informant as well who helped me in locating the households where suicide has been attempted. The key informants need to have a clear idea of the area in question with some social and communication skills. Keeping in view the UDCs It was important to identify a person with a good reputation in the area to assist me in taking the interviews, and for convincing them to take part in it for that I luckily had contact with a health supervisor of the area. Initially with help of her we had identified a total of 16 families with both suicide and suicide attempt cases but later on 3 of the families backed out for some personal reasons. Since being a health supervisor of the area every household that we wanted to interview welcomed us without any reluctance. Mainly being a female with a little persuasion they willingly continued with the interview.

3.2.2. Rapport Building

Before starting off with the interviews with the UDCs and considering the present sensitive study at hand it was not that easy for suicide attempters and for the family of the deceased in case of suicide to share with someone their side of the story. For that I had to consider building a strong relationship with my interviewees hence, establish some rapport so that the insightful information is not missed but trusted to share instead. Being from the same area myself, this might as well have already created some level of trust already, as without any understanding and mutual trust participants can be skeptical and suspicious. So in order to make someone to reveal intimate life information, it is vital to start by giving a clear picture of the intensions and keeping in view all the norms and culture of the society I gave it my top priority as well. This really differs from case to case, as in my situation I really did not had to try that much in building this rapport, being from the same area everyone knew me. This research could have been really difficult, if not impossible, for someone out of the area or to an unknown person. But since the respondents knew me as a person and also had known my family background they have openly shared their side of the story specially the female suicide attempters. As if they have been

waiting for someone to hear their plea and sorrow. Also of great help was the key informant in rapport building as the respondents knew her for the work she has seen doing and entrusted her with all the interview schedule.

3.2.3. Interviews

There are many types of interviews but three interview techniques namely structured, unstructured, and semi-structured interviews are widely used throughout the field of any research. Interviews are basically a way of communication between two people in order to collection a bulk of information for a specific purpose (Sachan, Singh, & Neeraj, 2012). Structured being used mainly in the arena of quantitative studies while the latter two in the qualitative researches. For this qualitative study as well I have used the following two interview methods for all the UDCs as deemed necessary.

3.2.3.1. In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are ideally being used for accumulating data on particular histories, viewpoints and experiences primarily when sensitive topics are being studied (Kothari, 2004). Keeping in view the sensibility as well as the severity of the topic it is important to get to the bottom of the phenomena, the causes of suicide and suicide attempts may entail some aspects of the socio-cultural norms of G-B, hence, in-depth interview technique has been used. In-depth interview is a technique where the researcher tries to elicit the experiences and perspective of the interviewee mostly during a face to face meeting. The motivation behind this technique is to get to know every detailed thing the interviewer deems important in regard to the topic of the research. The interviewer's role here is to listen carefully and direct the interview according to his planned guidelines also to getting a detailed review with the help of probing where necessary. That is because in this particular research the interviewer carries a list of topics or themes known as the interview guide, which are addressed during the interview. As the style of questioning in this technique is informal and varies from interview to interview, this gave me an edge to create an easy environment and avoided any generic responses giving me a more holistic understanding of the phenomena behind the suicidal behaviors. Hence, with a little directional influence through my question I was able to get a good gist of phenomena under consideration. Mostly, for UDC-1 this method was adopted, as they were a good source of eliciting as much information as possible about the suicide phenomena.

3.2.3.2. Semi-structured interviews

I have also used semi-structured interview technique which is also known to be the one which is most commonly preferred in the qualitative researches. Such interview method is favored because it tends to ask related questions from all its participants and the data later can be contrasted and compared with each other. For that the researcher carries an interview guide which is discussed below in detail. This has helped me to elicit any insightful information if there may exist, and asking similar questions will also allow me an access to a good gist of facts and figures connected with each participant. Doing all this without breaking the environment of

flexible and free speech from the participant's side. This semi-structured interviews have been used for all the other UDC's namely members of the family, neighbors and teachers.

3.2.3.3. Interview Guide

Also known as the interview schedule this basically is a list containing a few topics, points or even questions reckoned to be important by the researcher. This guide was there with me as well throughout my interview routines, helping me not only to ensure continuity but it also kept a track of time and most essentially the topics that needed to be covered. This also helped me to notify and revise the guide after each interview to get bottomless level of information, as I perceive it to be necessary.

3.3. Sampling

Doing sampling in a way that totally and completely incorporates the main cruxes of any phenomena under consideration should be the main aim of any good research. Sampling does not only focuses on selecting people but great importance is also given to the content the sampling technique would derive. Hence, deciding the sampling technique beforehand is very crucial. The logic behind deriving a sampling size is to make interpretations of much larger population (Berg, 2001). Considering the complexity as well as the intricacy of this topic and knowing that not every suicide attempters would be willing to cooperate, so instead of following strict sampling process, convenient sampling has been used for all the UDCs. According to Berg (2001) this particular grouping of sample depends on the availability of subjects i.e those who are at easy access or close at hand. Obviously there were quite a few more suicide cases but they were not interviewed as they opposed the idea of being interviewed and investigated, so their willingness was very important. Also of importance here was the use of snow ball sampling, as when interviewing a suicide attempter she inquired about whether I also interviewed a boy who also had attempted suicide and lived near as well. Not knowing about it before I enquired more from her before going to the suicide attempter for asking if he was willing to give interview, to which he later agreed. This struck me and after that I started to asked the suicide attempters and family/friends/teachers of the deceased victims if they knew about any such case. Which proved to be beneficial as being the inhabitants of the area they had more inside information to share.

3.4. Transcription and Data Analysis

As the data collection technique used for this research was semi-structures ones where participant observation was also useful and hence an interview guide so that the interview conversation was remained focused on the topic. Notes were also taken during the conducting the face to face interview. Apart from that all the interviews are recorded with approval of respondents.

So in order to analyze the bulk of data gathered from the interviews the best method was to search and identify patterns, trends and themes which could lead to interpreting the overall results of this study. The tool to identify these themes was framework analysis as Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) define it to be as a mechanism to interrogate and organize the qualitative data in such a way that helps researchers to identify themes, patterns, relationships and

sometimes through interpretations generate theories as well. A great deal of effort and time was invested to get familiarize with the data. Re-reading of the field notes and listening to recordings again and again were part of the process before formally starting data analysis. Since they were a small set of cases and interview schedules made sure the interviews to be much focused, the data was relatively easier to handle in identifying patterns and themes. Backed by anecdotes and quotes from the field, the findings were hence interpreted to link with the research objectives of this study. The various steps carried out for this framework analysis started with the transcription of the Data. As most of the interviews were conducted in local language *shina*, because it is the medium of communication and respondents felt comfortable to answer, except for a few in Urdu, nonetheless they all had to be translated into English and then transcribed in written form. Re-reading of the transcript and the familiarization process helped in identifying themes or concepts from all the gathered data, it also made easier to proceed to the next step of labelling relevant pieces. Here, since the bulk of information was not getting out of hands and was easier to manage, gathered themes that were reappearing without missing out any important point. Once these reoccurring themes had been identified, the next phase was to devise an index or the process which is also called as coding. The recognized themes were then categorized and sorted, combining small concepts/points wherever deemed necessary under a single heading. This was achieved by detecting links between the different categories from the first step, where groups were made thematically and then sorted them as well according to their similarity of nature.

3.5. Locale

Gilgit Baltistan is a self-rule region under the Gilgit Baltistan reforms and self-governance order 2009, enacted by presidential order in 2009. It has an independent legislative assembly and council. The Supreme appellate court of Gilgit Baltistan is independent and it is the highest court of the region. Constitutional status of GB is still ambiguous it is governed through order and notifications issued from the Federal Government in Islamabad. The locale chosen for this research is the capital of Ghizer district GB, Gahkuch. Ghizer is famous for its lush green valleys with a blend of rocky lands as well as green plains. It's a well-known district for having many beautiful lakes, Phander Lake, Khalti Lake, Karambar Lake to name a few. This district is located in the extreme north of Pakistan and hence G-B, *shina* is language widely spoken in the area of Gahkuch. It is bordered with China on the north side while the north-west is attached with the Wakhan corridor. Being a mountainous area Gahkuch is basically divided into two halves known as upper Gahkuch and Lower Gahkuch, or Gahkuch Bala and Gahkuch Pine respectively. According to Pakistan's 1998 census, the population was recorded to be 10,142.

Gahkuch being not far from the main Gilgit city, as it's only two hours' drive, health, education and economic situation has improved over the years. Both male and female educational attainments has increased with more and more influx of modernization. For centuries the inhabitants of the valley have been using the fertile land and great pastures with rivers and streams for agriculture and farming but with the passage of time job movement can be seen from agri-sector towards the service sector. Another major source of income in the previous years

have been livestock and animal husbandry. The land ownership and a large stock of cattle were not only associated with tribal superiority but they also were associated with strong political power or influence.

The elderly seemed to be extremely connected with the early times but the new generation is looking for a new and completely different social ambiance. Once the very appealing and celebrated communal lifestyle is slowly changing, all because of the new educated generation, who actually aspire to experience an individualistic way of life. Often the new generation of Gahkuch can be seen complaining about the elderly and they seem to be in a constant struggle to defend their actions without crossing the boundaries set by the elderly.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

Since I was aware of the ground realities related to individual's mindset, norms and people being concerned about revealing their inside stories, their hesitation to participate in an interview was not something unexpected. Considering all the protocols to carry out a field research, this study also ensured all the ethical and moral consents throughout the interview process. Being a very sensitive topic based on emotions, this study was not meant to hurt anyone. It might have hurt the feelings of people temporarily, but it is for a good cause in the long-run. So it was conducted with ethical care and consent, and harmony to elicit as much as information from the respondents possible. All the respondents from the deceased's side and the suicide attempters were approached in a proper and formal manner making sure that they knew what this contact entailed. Likewise, every respondent/participants were duly informed about the aims and objectives of the research and what they were expected. Trying to reach at the bottom of the topic at hand, without causing any physical and emotional harm to a person, they were informed to leave or to back out from the interview at any time. Some questions were emotion-based, which were asked in a very humble and polite manner. Privacy of the respondent and the case under observation were also highly respected and the families were rightly assured of not disclosing any of the information related to the case, deceased or the family to any person or entity. Since the interviews were tape-recorded the respondent were continuously made sure that in any way the information would remain only to the thesis work and would not be shared with the neighbors or relatives. As the feared the interviews would bring back the talks again and people would start gossiping if the recordings were misused. The respondents apart from the family members were more reluctant to share their information about the case and feared being recorded. Like confidentiality another important aspect was anonymity, hence the elimination of any record of the respondent's or victim's names. Elimination of any elements that in any way might have indicated the subject's identify or the identities of the respondents was made sure in this thesis. Therefore, all the respondents and the suicide attempters remained nameless throughout this research work and they were made sure to provide a higher degree of confidentiality. Hence, instead of calling out for names, case numbers were given and addressed accordingly throughout the interview. Withholding certain details of occupation, workplace and name of hospitals for treatments were also made sure. Overall, such omissions and withholding

some private material has not made a significant difference to the clarification and organizing of themes, so the main points have stood nevertheless.

Chapter 4

3 Results and Discussions

This chapter will be dealing with all the cases individually, keep in view every aspect and detail of the cases studied for this research. This section is also enriched with the narratives of the respondents comprehensively written to elaborate on more on the research questions. Different quotes and anecdotes are also being shared to help the readers to get a good gist of the problem at hand. The following pages, which is basically a huge bulk of data, will give a smooth ride to the readers towards the next phase of findings and analysis.

4.1. Case 1

This case is of a 23 year old boy who was studying in 2nd year of his college when he shot himself to death. According to his roommate he was a simply boy who never caused any kind of trouble in hostel, a calm, silent and simple guy with a small social circle, as his roommate had said,

“wos morr aki ne thesol, gap shap ga thok khosh ne thesol. Shor khush aki ne thesol ayecho kalo jo ga durr beyasol. Laa mur thedek bali ga ne khosh thesol tou...asal derr bus weset chaga thoko joga allergy asil...”

“He would not talk much and did not like chit chatting either. He would stay out of fights as he disliked noise, in fact he was allergic to it (talking) and did not like guys who talked a lot...”

In accordance with his nature, according to his roommate, he preferred friends with the same nature as himself. Befriending those who were guileless and childlike. His nature was such that part from his small friend of circle in college he also was in good terms with the local drivers as well as people from professional fields, those quite mature. Being from a wealthy family he would often help his college mates by financing them, and would often give away money to poor and needy ones wherever he saw. His roommate also quoted an incident where the deceased stayed up all night for a young boy, a total stranger, who met an accident and how he helped him with the hospital bills and check-ups. He not only gave the young boy some money but his number as well in order to contact again if needed any kind help or more even money. As I quote his roommate again,

“Insaniat lae aki asil je wesor...”

“Humanity was more in him...”

The roommate agreed that the victim had given him not only hints of committing suicide but have also said explicitly many times. According to him the victim would often get downhearted and would light up a cigarette (sometimes) besides a sad conversation but did not really understood the reason. Upon enquiry the victim would shrug off the question by only saying,

“Wo kehta tha yaar choro tum mere maslaay sun k kya karogay wese b mae suicide krne wala hun. Aksar us k mun se aise dialogs or baatin nikalti theen...”

“...he would say ‘Dear! What would you do by listening to my problems, I am going to commit suicide anyway’. He would often utter these type of words and dialogs...”

The victim would quite frequently use the word suicide and he would often get into arguments with his roommate. Keeping a gun should have been a valid clue too. According to one of his friend he had a 9mm and use to keep it in his pocket but later some time his brother-in-law took it from him and did not return. The victim in fact tried to convince his friends to arrange one for him but they did not. The friends did not know where he got the gun with which he shot himself and were fully unaware of it. It is really sad to know that even with all these clues, no body realized this was going to happen. And whenever the friend tried to make him realize how badly devastated his family would be, he showed no care. According to his friend, the victim would rather say that,

“Wo kehta tha k ye sub waqti hoga or saal ya kuch maheeno mae he un ka ghaam durr ho jaega. Or mujhe b us ski fikar krna chorne ko bola. Wo kisi se mazak b nae krta tha, ab jab mae sochta hun, mujhe yaad nahi k wo kabi khul k b hansa ho. Pata nae kya gham tha use.”

“He would say, ‘It will be temporary and the sadness will go away within a year or a few months’ and that I should too stop being worried about him. He would never joke around with anyone, now that I think, I do not remember him laughing openly. Do not know what he was so grieved about.”

It seems that in comparison to his own nature, this world seemed totally opposite to him. As whenever sadness creped in, he would blame his surroundings as if he expected something more from it. He would think way higher than what his age fellows would and had big dreams for his future and his roommate mentions that he would often say,

“...uss ne kaha, ‘Iss dunya mae koi maza nae hai, kuch acha krne ka socho tou ye dunya gira deti hai... or mujhe kabi bara admi bnay nae degi’...”

“...he had said, ‘There is no fun in this world, think of doing something good and the world will bring you down... and would never let me be a big man’...”

He clearly had issues in his life but never mentioned those to his roommate. While his roommate fully aware of the victim’s talks related to suicidal thoughts tried to change him and upon asking if he tried asking for help from someone else as well, the roommate’s idea was to keep it to himself and keep trying to bring a change in the victim without making it a big scene and violating his privacy. But it seems that getting help from outside could have saved the life, when it was so obvious how close the victims was to ending his lifespan.

It can be inferred from the interviews that things changed when he got into 2nd year of his studies. As he was on scholarship from the 10th grade and always came first in the class but he stated to lose interest later on and hence started failing subjects. But he did not cared at all, as according to his friend,

“...phir wo kehta tha, ‘Mera khawab kabi pure nae hongay’. Iss k elawa usse na apne result se kitabon or na he fail hone se masla tha.”

“...Then he would say, ‘My dreams are never going to fulfill’. Apart from that he (the victim) had no problem concerning the result, books or getting failed.”

Upon enquiring his behavior in class one of his teacher’s view were parallel to that of his friend and roommate, like showing less attention in class and often lost in his own thoughts. The teachers would try to engage him in class lectures but this somewhat made him angry and would not even pay ‘Salam’ at times but contrary to that, his teacher also mentioned him as,

“...bhott he moody tha, mera matlb matlab rutha hwa sa. Class mai bhi kise k sat batain nahi karta tha. larka tha bohoth he intelligent tha orr wo bara sharp student tha, us k sat is tarha ka masala nahe hota, koi prashani nahe hoti tou us nay bohoth agay jana tha.”

“...he was very moody, I mean distant. Even in class he would not talk to anyone. The boy was very intelligent and he was a very sharp student if he did not had such a problem and had no trouble he would have been so successful in life.”

He was not attached to his parents, according to his roommate, and did not seemed to care about them either. While he always showed concern towards his brothers. His roommate shared an instance where the victim came from home and upon questioning about his changed and sad behavior the victim mentioned how his father has changed and has a rigid behavior. Actually he happened to be arguing his father about giving his elder brother another land for building a house, as the already allocated land had graveyard nearby. The victims view was that it would not be appropriate to enter and exit the home by looking at the graveyard, the house should rather be built in a nice surrounding. His roommate recalls that day by saying that the victim narrated his father’s saying,

“... ‘agar mujhe b jane ka shok hai tou chala jaon mae bhi, isse unhe koi farq nahe parhega’... iss baat se wo bhot na khush tha. Or uss ne ye bhi kaha, ‘Yaar! Mere abu badal gae hain, kya hua hai tou unhe?’...”

“...if ‘I want to go with them (referring to the dead ones in the graveyard) than I should too, as it does not matter to him’... he was very upset that day with this. And he also said, ‘Dear! My father has changed, what has happened to him?’...”

He had huge respect for his father and the victim has also mentioned to his friends how they both were on different tracks and mentality. Nevertheless the victim always had reverence towards his father and never had spoken loudly in his presence. But he won’t share any of his matters to them, specially his father, it was a rather lose bond between the father and the son. On the other hand his parents’ rather portrayed to be very concerned about him and vice versa. He would often complain about getting heaches to his mother and they blamed the poor grades and educational pressure to be the main reason, hence keeping a light hand on him. One very

important anecdote from his parent's interview was that due to a small argument with his parents he had torn his matric certificate⁴. They no doubt have felt the changed behavior in him too and his bad grades in studies after matric made them even more worried which made them to keep a loose hand thinking he already is going through a lot of pressure, without actually trying to get to the main reason, which is still not clear. His father had said,

“Mas khas wesae hae khwaish puri thas, jaik rayok aye thas. Bus anu gham hen k wesae heor jaik hen o lail thok dubales. Khoket tik ga got das or rupaye jo kare khali ne churas anu soch thay k kare baro bil tou mat madad bae. Wo tou ma tak thare phat thok, zindagi barre kaar...”

“I almost fulfilled all his wishes, did everything the way he wanted. It is sad that we still could not figure out what was going on in his heart. Provided him food and shelter never left him without money, thought he could share my burden when he grows up, but he left me broken for the rest of my life...”

His father on the other hand blames giving more money to him, which he should not have and regrets now. But this does not really clarify why receiving more money resulted in taking his own life. He was not into any kind of drugs, not even a regular smoker, according to his roommate the victim would only smoke when highly depressed and whenever the friends gathered only he would not drink saying that it makes him vomit and dizzy. So he would just sit there while his friends enjoy the occasion with a drink.

What concludes from this interview it looks that the victim expected more from his loved ones and did not really find a shoulder to lay his head on. Already depressed when he was left alone to make his own decisions this fateful incident occurred neither did he seem to convey his feelings properly nor his friends or family were successful in getting to know him better. Without getting to know the battle he was fighting inside him, the parents only grew more concerned about him and in fear of further aggravating the situation, they totally left it on his own fate.

4.2. Case 2

The victim in this case had spent most of his childhood in his maternal grandparent's house due to his father's army job. A young boy of 9th grade full of joy and fun. His hostel warden describes him as the funniest boy in hostel, very cooperative and someone who would listen to you. He was not “mentally sick” or anything like that. A very healthy boy who was not into fights and was always happy and ready to help.

Due to his education he was living in Gilgit city and was a hostelite. He went missing the day before the actual incident occurred, he came to the hostel from his grandparent's house for like 10-15 minutes, met everyone there and left. After 30 minutes he started to text his friends to ‘forgive him’ and to ‘take care of his parents’, according to the father. He texted few of his friends ‘that he will be found near the river’. This message triggered his friends and they tried

⁴ The parents did not elaborate more on this rather they seemed to be hiding things and just kept saying that it was a normal argument. No other respondent knew about it upon enquiring to dig deep.

replying and calling to his number, initially he did not pick and then it went off completely. When the father was informed about the prevailing situation, the very next morning he came to the hostel. All his hostel friends and a few relatives tried to find him, FIR was registered in the police station by the victim's father, local newspaper and social media was also used to traced down the boy. They kept trying the phone and at 11 am the phone was finally attended, it was not him but instead a police officer, breaking the news that his dead body was found and asked his friend to come to the city hospital.

When they arrived the victim was already dead and the police was informed by a young boy whose mother, while washing clothes on the river bank, heard a gunshot and saw the victim falling to the ground. With quick action the woman had sent his son to inform the police and report the incident.

This case appears to have not one but multiple whys and wherefores which led to the incident. One of the reason for taking this atrocious act according to his friends could be his poor performance in his studies. Due to his inadequate subject results he was forced to leave the school and give the exams privately, while his parents were not aware of it. This might as well have pressurized him as the incident occurred after 15, 20 days of their exam. And in his friend's opinion the victim might have guessed his poor performance and hence the results. He might have feared the rage his poor performance will bring to his father, as he did not inform them about and was in fact hiding it from them, fears the friend. As the victim's warden admitted that his father is quite strict and the father himself had said that,

"...parhae mamla der tou ma lao khacho henos ne..."

"...I'm strict when it comes to education..."

"...Ma rozae kamek khacho henos o ado ne asil..."

"...I do have a short temper but he wasn't like this (short tempered)..."

This might have triggered his emotions and fear crippled to such level that he thought it to be a good idea to die instead of facing his father with such poor grades. During the question answer session the father revealed his expectations towards the victim which means that the victim was well aware of them too and the fear of not reaching to that level might have scared him. The father had said,

"Lao kom thanos ne armior. Att ae officeri pashi rae waan k asae shudarii ga aye bot, anaa watanae shudari ga aiyee bot...parhae jari shurott, officeri bot. Harr maa malae anaa hidayat been ne..."

"I have worked more in the army. Seeing officers there, we also desire our children, children of this area to become officers there someday... continue the education, become an officer. All parents advice these..."

In parallel to his friend's view the hostel warden had a similar story to tell as well. Another important participant in this case, whose main task is to look after the kids enrolled. Initially, the warden was the one who told his father that the victim has not been going to school due to his registration for exams as a private candidate.

"...private student ho k taqriban 3 maheenay guzar chuke thay or uss k abu ko khabar tak na thi. Chupaya hua tha apne abu se uss ne. Pata chalne per uss k abu ne phone kya na or pucha k 'beta tum hostle mae be nae ho or ye keh rae hain k tum school b nae ja rahe, kya waja hai?' kya pata iss ki waja hai uss ne pressure liya ho demag mae..."

"...Almost 3 months had passed as a private student and his father did not know about it. He had hidden it from his father. Upon revealing the news, his father called him saying 'Beta you're not in hostel and they say you're not going to school either, what's the reason?' Who knows this might have caused pressure in his mind..."

As if he knew his bad result and so he might as well had already planned killing himself. As the warden had said,

"...Baad mae uss ka result dekh k he mujhe andazaa ho gaya tha, kahin uss k 6 number hain, kahin 8 or kahin tou 3 b thay..."

"...Later seeing his result I had realized, in some subjects he took 6 marks, some 8 and in some even 3..."

Another thing highlighted which might have further aggravated the tensed situation was the hostel dues. The hostel fees was not paid for three months according to the warden, when in fact his parents would send him check every month. It was also anecdotal that he had in fact even borrowed some money from his relatives. The warden further continued saying,

"Bus yehi cheezen theen jo wajuhaat bani or phr uss k abu ki taraf se sakht rawayya. Ye sub cheezen uss ki liye maslaay paida kr rae thay. Bus phr bacha he tou tha, sahi faisala nae le saka..."

"It was like these things as well, which acted as barrier and then a harsh talk from his father. All these things had created problem for him. After all he was a kid could not take any decision..."

Upon asking where they thought he had use the money or whether he would instead use the money on drugs, it was quite clear from the views of all the participants that he was not into such things but was instead had outlook totally opposing such acts. Although he was quite spendthrift and would waste money unnecessarily in buying cloths and eating out. He was more into fashion as the warden had said and the warden had further said that with the same money he might as well have bought the gun. No doubt it is something huge to own a pistol as a student. But the warden's view on it was

“Ajj kal tou 3000 ka b utha lete hain. Paise un k pass wese b hote hain, na b hue tou bahanay se le lete hain apne waleeden se bhi. Itna mushkil b nahi hai, kahin se b utha sakte hain...”

“...Nowadays you can pick even for 3000 rupees. Money is there with them, they can even make excuses and ask more from their parents as well. It is not that hard they can pick it from anywhere...”

It would have been more clear if the police had investigated about the pistol the victim shot himself with but the father already declared it to be his son's own fault and because he did not wanted any of his friends or hostiles to go through any kind of inspection or trouble. And the father had said according to the warden,

“... 'Yahn ke sare bachay mere apne bachon jese hain, mujhe inn se kuch nae hai. Jo kuch b mere bachay ne kya hai... ye ussi ki apni galti se hua hai hai' kahan uss k abu ne idr.”

“... ‘All the kids in the hostel are like my own kids. I do not have anything to do with them. Whatever my son has done... has done it due to his own fault’ his father said here (in hostel).”

It seems like he could not really handle the situation, poor grades, hostel dues, and a harsh talk from father on being a private student, all these episodes let to this fateful event. On top of this, the victim also experienced the pain of losing 2 friends from suicide⁵ and his school teacher, who was apparently very close to him, died in a road accident. Seeing the death of his friends through suicide, might as well caused some influence on the victim to carry the same path too. According to his father,

“Lao tang bilsol ano kar thay...lae aki khosh thesol dubeye. Wos rasol ba, “Babo! Dubeyes ako zayah thaygay, lae nuksaan bil.”

“...He was very disturbed because of them (friends)... my son really liked both of them. He would say, ‘Dad! Both had wasted themselves and it is a great loss.’”

These were the friends he was much attached to but they were no more with him. This might as well left him hopeless and with the feeling of great loss. The teacher also gave a great set back to him. The victim would often post his pictures on Facebook with deep caring captions and whenever he came from Gilgit on vacations he would always pay a visit to his teacher's house and would often go to schools for attending his lectures.

The interviews from each respondent gave the impression that the victims was not having any good time around the main event, as all the happenings were turning against him. Pressurizing to take this brutal act.

⁵ According to his parents some say it was an accident but the father believed that it was not an accident. What's known about the accident is that they have said to die of suffocation due to gas leakage, which was rather a made up story according to the father.

At this time of trouble the victim really needed someone to hold onto. His two good friends were dead, the teacher he was really closed to died, all there left were his parents but they were the ones he needed help to deal with. And neither had they gained the trust of his child to share things or the troubles that he was going through. The warden's observation about the parent's behavior was such that the students from Ghizer were mostly left on their own. Further saying,

“...Jahan tak...mera khayal hai maa baab or bachon mae bhot gap hai. Bhatt kam aisa maa baab hain jo apne bachon ka puchte hain. Wo kin se milta hai? Kis tarah ki sargarmion mae masroof rehta hai? Ziadah tar Ghizer k 1 ya 2 waleeden, mere notice k mutabik, aise hain jo nazdeeki rabtay mae hotay hain apne bachon k sath...”

“...As far as... in my understanding there is a gap between the students and their parents. Very few parents are such that they ask about their kids. Who do they meet? In what activities is she/he involved? Mostly in Ghizer, I have noticed 1 or 2 parents are in close communication with their children...”

He was much attached to his mother though. He would go to her whenever anything came up. His father had said even for 50 rupees or 1500 he would always go to his mother and ask her but never came to him. Highlighting a point that the relationship between the father and the victim was not an easy one but rather was more afraid of him and the sudden occurrence of events made him more fearful towards him, as his father's friend had said,

“...oss chaga thoksol tom puchae meerokae or akot aki rasol k, ‘Mas feesae rupaye dasos wo kharcha thae khin ho mas kalo das wesae sishech ako de marok’.”

“...He has discussed his son's death with me and blamed himself for it by saying that, ‘I gave him the fees which he spent and when I scolded him he just took his life’.”

As according to the victim's friend it was a shock to know that he could do something like this he even narrated an incident where the victim felt really angry on a boy who had committed suicide, saying what good did the act could possibly bought the boy. Further lamenting how much pain this might have inflicted on the boy's parents. Pressure from the parents' side to get good marks and high level of expectations, when the victim was in fact in a total opposite direction, seem to be the main reason behind this heinous act. Backed with so many unfavorable circumstance around the same time, the young boy did not really knew how to handle such situations and seem to have preferred death instead. Supposedly, if his parents were any less strict or at least not so fearful a life could have been saved.

4.3. Case 3

This case is related to a young sharp girl only 20 years old. Who had completed her education till 1st year and in the middle of her 2nd year her parents decided to get her out of college. So she was home from the last 8 months when the incident took place. According to her mother what she did is a huge set back to them as such an act was not expected from her, in fact she would even curse

all those who did such an act. But it looks like things got out of her control when she decided to poison herself.

So apparently one day when they were soaking up the sun, the victim's mother told her to go and prepare some food for his father who had just arrived from his job. When she was done with the food serving she started to prepare some tea as well upon his father's demand. She had mixed the milk as well and as she went into the store to get the cups, she did not come back out again. The mother had sent her granddaughter to call her out, there she informed that something has happened to the victim as she was lying on the ground. The mother had said,

“...Was tou jaik morr thok aki dubaal ne, bus bejatti sheelaad haye awaze nikhalo gae...”

“...As if she could not talk anymore, she kept on making scary and painful sounds...”

Amongst all this chaos the family couldn't figure out what has happened. With very difficulty they rushed to the nearest hospital from where they were told to head towards the main hospital in the main Gilgit city which is almost 2 hours' drive. The whole travel she did not talk properly and when they finally reached the hospital, within a minute or two she passed away.

As her mother recalls the victim was very sharp and very much into studies. Always dreaming of getting a good job once her study's complete but this could not really happen as the health of her mother started to deteriorate, she still has heart issues and due to weakness most of the household work goes in pending. The mother could not take it anymore and called her daughter (the victim) back to home, who was studying in another town. She had passed her 1st year and was said to complete her studies after gap of a year or two. As her mother says,

“...Ba jaik ma batharit thangh phat bilis ne. Washroomet thangh ma gini harenesel muti kos ga. Tou wesae babos rayuk, 'Ali dee! Teng gottor ko ga nush tou us anu saal zayah thay, jaik ga ne been, adoga saal zayah bil tou ga bae'. Anu mor gin tang bisil or schoolet xhana thay reesil ba rasil ga ne sos mae saal zayah that they...”

“...And then what happened is I was limited to bed. Even for washroom I had to be carried by someone. So her father said, 'Daughter, since no one is available at home you should waste this year, nothing will happen, even if it is wasted'. She used to get depressed on this and use to cry to send her to school and use to complain about wasting her school year...”

She would often complain about not letting her go to school for further studies. Which seems to be the most central cause of suicide in this case or the major one which has led to the event. She also would often argue with her parents that not studying do not give them the right to get her married, like her sisters who got married quite early. So this thought was in her mind too that since she is not studying and has passed her 1st year her family would arrange her marriage. As her mother recalls how she feared her marriage,

“...was rasil ba ghar ne thamis thay, ado yerr job thay tom aki paoch khara bum thesil. Ba was rasil ne, ‘Ten schoolet ne gais tou mae yare parokae saali ghucho bujenun ne’ bus muti jaik na rasil...”

“... She would say that she is not going to get married, before that she has to do a job and be independent. She would say, ‘Now, if I do not go to school, my whole previous years of studying will go in vain’ and nothing else she would say...”

The victim tried to submit her 2nd year’s forms privately and required 7000 rupees from her brother who resided abroad and willingly agreed to send her the money. But his father stepped in and said

“...wesae malos manah thok ba form submit ne thae thay adoga ae rupae gini jack gin akot, butae gin sheele gin. Lakin form ne gin thok aise kar thay ae 7000 rupae ne damos thok...”

“...then her father said not to submit the forms and instead do anything else with the money, buy clothes and shoes. And not to submit the forms as for it he won’t give the 7000 rupees to her...”

Her father wanted her to stay at home and help her mother instead, regretting only if he had known how much this depressed her. The mother recalls her crying and coming up to her saying that she will submit the forms even if she had to pay late fee fine as well. She would quite often quote, says her aunt, examples of few girls who have continued with their education even after marriage and some with kids. The day before she committed suicide she was in her grandparent’s house, her mother also fears that she has seen girls there going to colleges and her friends might even have asked her questions about not continuing her studies further.

Another possible cause of the incident that surfaced during the interview was losing 8000 rupees of a women who gave it to the victim for some insurance registration⁶. She was working as an insurance member for 7 or 8 months. She did not inform her parent about losing the money instead have asked the neighbors to lend her the amount which she would soon return. The neighbors and even his cousin brother took the matter lightly and did not do anything at all about the money, but this seemed to really depress her. And now the mother really wishes if they had told her secretly about the matter without letting the victim know, since they themselves could not help, things could have been different now.

“...Jag se ranen anukech ge rae gin k, ‘Ten ga aa chae wat tou mae gotaes ma marenen tou aise jo mishti I mas ako aki de marum ya goli kham ya tou ge arr damis’...”

“...People say she had told them that “If the women comes asking again my family would kill me so I better kill myself or I will eat poison or I will jump into the river’...”

The insurance women had visited the victim many times, asking for the money return. But every time the victim would make a new excuse. Her father recalls the women coming to the house so

⁶ Local people are hired as insurance members by insurance companies. Since the victim was quite young, she was still hired for being very active as well as outspoken and hence could easily persuade locals to buy insurance.

many times that it made him wonder what was going on. And now the mother appears to be very disheartened about not knowing that the victim had actually lost the money while the mother kept pressurizing to solve the issue since the insurance women had come many times asking for the money return. The mother even had said that the father would kill both of them if the women came one more time, now the mother feels like,

“...Ten tou mas tom haguye chapamis ne yar lail baish ta. Mas ga lae bejarainis ne wa...”

“... Now here I am lamenting⁷ only if I knew the matter before. I made her scared too...”

She was not attached to her parents as she has been bought up in her grandmother’s house away from her parents. And only for the last two years she was there with them. As her mother claims this detachment to be the reason for their distance. We know how important it is to have a healthy relationship with parents, but it was not a strong bond in this case. And the level of trust between the parents and child seems to be a weaker one. The mother already being a patient of heart the victim always revisited her thoughts before expressing them to her mother, as the mother recalls,

“Aik tou mae anu heye masala hen ne, jaik chaga ga ne thesil ma kech. Anisech bejai sum thay tom maslaay ga ne rasil ma kech, mat muti ga tang bum thay...”

“I have heart problem due to which she was afraid to tell me anything. Due to the fear she would not talk to me openly about her problems, thinking things might distress me further...”

And the mother also confessed that not continuing her studies was a great stress for her but she never openly admitted only not to distress her. Further we can also extract some views on father-daughter relationship from the mother’s interview that,

“...Tom malo lae khosh ne thesil wass...”

“... She did not like his father that much...”

Due to the reason that he was not supporting her in attaining education and because of his short temper she would also argue and even talk back from time to time with her father. She was not afraid of him and was full of anger from childhood. It seem that she kept accumulating pressures inside her without anyone giving her the chance to express and resolve her issues.

The last days her health completely deteriorated, possibly due to all the pressure she was facing around her. As her mother says, she was just 20, a kid, she was greatly tensed losing all the money. Adding more to this the mother said,

“...lae khachi bilsil waa, halixhe be phat bilsil, ayaak halixhe k bus khul aki bok deksil. Mas ga heach rayis, ‘Ayak k na ashati bilin thay? Niset bukhara ga nush tou’ mat ten jaik lail asil...”

⁷ Here the mother had actually used a shina idiom, word to word translated as ‘now I am chewing my fingers’ means to regret on past actions on which nothing can be done or change now.

“...she had gotten bad, she turned pale, so pale that she was almost finished. I even thought to myself ‘why has she gotten so thin? She does not even have fever’ little did I know...”

Upon enquiring the victim would only say that she is having headaches from a few months. Somedays she would be all happy and at other times she would get dull and depressed. The mother had additionally claimed that the lost money might have caused the pain in her head due to taking excess tension.

Many other minute instance had occurred where the victim was scolded and was being told to stay low as she was active and very boisterous as well. She was also offered a job in a nearby school where she really wanted to go but because all the teachers were male she was not allowed to join. As according to her mother his brother’s response was,

“... *Mae poch se ga rayok ne lakh denun tou ga ne xhana thay...*”

“...My son also said that do not send her to the school even if they pay in lakh...”

The mother remembers that then she kept on sorrowfully say that we do not allow her to do anything and are rather restricting her. Here the parents seemed to be a bit resentful and explained their behavior due to the society that we live in, with all the gossips and few cases of girls running away from their parent’s house really made them cautious and hence the restrictions.

So far in father’s view the death was caused mainly due to her involvement with the insurance group. He was even adamant to take the woman to court who kept coming to their house and pressurized the victim to return the lost money. The money would not have lost if she was not working with them in the first place, he says. Her father from the very beginning seemed to be against her decision of working there. He no doubt seemed to be a little narrow minded and hence all the restrictions from his side.

4.4. Case 4

The victim in this case was a 10 grade student, and never failed any subject according to her mother and due to her good grades she had been studying on scholarship and was the brightest among her 7 siblings. She belonged to a poor family, and her father after retirement from the army had sold all the land for drugs and now the whole family was on the mercy of a small chicken shop run by her elder brother.

The day when this event occurred they already had guests at their place and the victim has been serving them throughout the day, made lunches, prepared dinner, even baked *Chupatti*⁸ as well, before she took her own life at evening by eating poison. That evening she went into her room and started to vomit all of a sudden and her mouth was full of blood.

⁸ A local bread like a huge bun made of flour, water or milk or eggs. It is widely consumed throughout the regions of Gilgit in the morning or with the evening tea sessions.

Her mother also recalls her giving away all the clothes and distributing them amongst all her friends. Her mother took it lightly thinking they might be just exchanging clothes among each other. Her behavior had changed almost a month before the event, she even got sick and would often complain about headaches. As her mother recalls,

“... Wa tou mutik aki bilsil anu waqae jo kamek daiz yer. Lae aki ashati bilsil, wesae aru jeel aki ne asil aik glass wayey ga hun thok. Was jaik soch thesil bush. Bus chup bay bayesil. Na komek ga jaik heyo gin thok...”

“Her demeanor had already changed a few days before the actual incident. She was getting weaker, as if she had no strength to hold even a glass of water. Do not know what she use to think. She would stay silent. Neither had she any interest in doing any work...”

Her mother also enquired about her changed conduct and the victim also felt the sudden transformation in her actions and manners admitting to her mother that,

“...tou was mat rayeek, ‘Ajee! Mae jaick ga thok kae rae ne waan tus ra tou jaik aruno muenis’”

“... So she said to me, ‘Mother! I do not feel like doing anything, as if I am dead from inside.’”

The mother also mentioned that she did not even comb her hair for days. Though her mother did take her to clinic when she kept on complaining about headaches and doctors said she was suffering from some kind strain and pressurizing herself by over thinking. Her mother further says that she would not share her thoughts and did not tell her secrets to anyone and was not even close to her mother, as the father admits. She was always lost in her own thoughts around the time and she was not anything like this before. Apart from the sudden changed behavior she really never gave any indication of such an act, and whenever she heard any suicide incident, according to her mother the victim would say,

“...was rasil ba ‘Besharam jak se ako de marenun’ ho phatu mat khujisil ‘ayak ais kono hemmatek atenun o kon thoket’. Ten mat jaik lail? Bus aise waqt asil bus watsil mout wesset.”

“...she would say ‘People who kill themselves are shameless’ and would than ask me ‘Where do they find all the courage to do such an act’. How would I know? It was her time and death came on her so she died.”

One very important element in this case was that the victim’s father was a Sunni whereas the victim herself and her mother is an Ismaili. There had been clashes among the family and both of them were pressurized to leave Ismailism as well but her mother never gave up and fought back. Here, the father had tried to give away the victim in marriage to a Sunni boy but before that could happen she received an Ismaili boy’s proposal. The father was not happy at all and going against the will of her mother and the victim’s, who were happy with the boy, turned down the proposal. But then her mother’s brother also took her side forcing the father to agree too. According to her friend she further goes on by saying,

“lae aki khush asil ako majaa, merae khin o baal se case thamos thok sol maa ma loch. Ais aki maraingen thesol ba wasae aki goteis rathaik. Bijilis ba wae malos rishat bus thay tom pasandae muti keset dae thay. Phat ne aki thamis theesil o baal. Mae khayalech aisae malos aki wa lae pressure der atogon bus thay thay, nasha thesol ne zakk ga thay beyeskae.”

“They were really happy with each other and when died, the boy even tried to file case against her parents too. He blamed them for her death but he was held back by his family. She was always afraid that her father might end the relation and give her hand to someone his father preferred. She never wanted to leave the boy. I think his father had pressurized her to leave him, he was a drug addict so he might have hit her too.”

It was obvious that the mother got more conscious as soon as the father joined the interview and throughout the talk her father kept repeating unnecessarily how much he wanted her to marry her own choice. Her parents did not really pointed the cause of her death, sure they were hiding something regarding her engagement to that Ismaili boy. His father’s behavior was weird too and seemed to be stricter towards her generally, as her mother had quoted an incident when he was not present in the interview. That mother had said,

“Ayak jaik gul mil bay nush depocho sath. Gote jo daru bil tou bejokae bagir shudari hazi noti beyenun, o watto aki bus tom tom deshor ge aki beyen chup thay.”

“He is not so friendly with the children. Most of the time when he is out of the house the kids laugh playfully without the fear of their father getting angry on them and as he comes home everyone goes back to sitting silently.”

It also came up during the interview that her fiancé wanted to get married soon, but her father was delaying it for no apparent reason. The victim had already started collecting her dowry too, saying, as I quote her friend,

“Tom gharae tyariae gini ga lae tang bisil, sasil jaik bay jaik chezek bae ne, jaik jahezek harae thay. Was tom jama rupaye jo cushioni ga thak sil ba. Bus ten malo ga khush nush maganiae jo tou bijisil khali tom gotet bujae thay.”

“She really use to get upset with her wedding preparations too, saying how will things work out, and what will she take as her dowry. She had already made cushions with the money she had saved. Since his father was not so happy with the engagement she was afraid she will end up taking nothing to her house.”

Getting engaged to someone at so young age already takes a huge toll on one’s mental and physical health let alone even getting an opposition from the family. The two families were already going through a rough phase, according to the mother the boy never came to their house due to her father’s opposition. And it is even heart aching to know that due to the same unfriendliness and obstruction, no one from her fiancé’s family came to her funeral not even

himself. So it seems that the father had been pressurizing his daughter to end the relation with her fiancé and marry the boy of his choice.

4.5. Case 5

The victim's father was an army retired and the victim herself had completed her 10th grade. It all started from the very beginning of her married life, before that she was all good and normal. As her uncle narrates the story like,

“Shamae timech kare atenkhin, tus ra tou jaik jin shaton thay ye ado phatot bus wasset pareshan achit, de nu khacho de wo khacho wesae zindagior.”

“At evening when she was brought as a bride, it was as if a *jin* got hold of her and from there she started worrying and complaining about everything in life”

The victim was said to be worried all the time and mentally disturbed as well, where she would often complain about suffering from anxiety and would often whine about headaches. She was not like this before and even condemned such acts and were against it, the victim's aunt from maternal side had also committed suicide by jumping into the river on which she was really saddened and called it a coward stunt. This all happened right after getting married. Both the families had invested huge sums not only on her medical expenditures but they also tried to find a remedy through amulets as well, she would regularly take her medicines and *Hudah*⁹ too. But nothing seemed to cure her and she had gotten more and more upset with each passing day. When nothing worked her husband divorced her instead within one and a half month into marriage, his uncle says,

“...wesae baros rayuk ba ten nas aki beyok ne manin gotorr tou mus churam thas tou ga jaik thay churam. Tou ba jaik beyes kae khul phat tok ba.”

“...Her husband even told that he wanted to keep her but she herself is not even willing to stay at home. So nothing could be done, hence the divorce.”

Than after a year another family asked for her hand for their son who was in army. Her second marriage only took place when they were informed fully about her health issues and they in return accepted her with a promise to continue her treatment. After getting married the second husband took her to Karachi where she gave birth to a baby girl as well, after many treatments and prayers she finally was all good. But this did not stay the same for long, as they shifted back to their hometown the “illness” of getting “upset” came back again. During the illness the victim asked for divorce because she was not getting any better, her husband did not even gave an ear to her rather promised to treat her.

⁹ It is a prescription from *peers* and is given by them to the patients to eat according to their directions. Due to her constant complains the victim was also taken to *peers* as well, who are said to have powers to recover a person from any mental or even physical ailments and the local people have strong believe that it can bring good as well.

After staying at her husband's house the victim came to her parents' home and stayed there for about 6, 7 months she was all good during this time, says the victim's father. The victim only stayed a month at his husband's house after marriage. After some time the victim's husband came on vacation's so the victims left her parents' house after a few days the victims had said according to her father,

"...raek k ten aik ghanta ga o gottor beyok dubamis thaik..."

"... (Victim's name) said she cannot stay there (with her husband's family) even for an hour..."

And haphazardly the victim and her husband left the home and reached her parents' home at night. The matter must be something serious as night travels are not really preferred in villages. As the victim's mother was saying how the victim had neither bad-mouthed her husband nor complaint about him, the victim's father interrupted and said she was reserved so she could possibly be hiding things. She always seemed to be distant from her family and did not share much with them, her sister only seemed to know more about what she wanted and how she felt. She was mentally disturbed at that time, says her mother, seconding this her sister had also said,

"Awa ba! Reesil ba k wesae heeyet shat hen thay..."

"Yes! She would cry too saying that her heart is never at ease..."

The incident took place the next morning, as his father recalls the victims was giving bath to her child and gave her a new dress as well, as he went out to bring the victim her medicines. The victim left the child with her younger sister and told she was going to meet her uncle's family. The sister says that she even told her to wait till her husband comes but the victim didn't listen and went anyway. She left the house and went directly toward the river where she jumped into it. When she was leaving the house, says her uncle, she contacted her husband who told crying that she had said,

"...tom shudarae khayal chure, ma bujamis."

"...take care of your child, I am going."

Being a married women with a child she took a huge toll on her health and kept thinking about her illness which made her more vulnerable. As her sister had said,

"...soch thesil ba wesech rasil ga k hamesha aki beemar henis kare ga sum bok bash nushish"

"...She (victim) would think on the matter saying I am always ill and never going to get cured"

She wanted to stay in Karachi, her husband agreed as well but told her to wait just a few months. Nonetheless she did not wanted to wait due to which she was even vexed with him as the victim use to get angry really fast, she could not really tolerate her anger.

As a researcher the interviews gave an impression that the first marriage was against the will of the victim or at least she was forced into the marriage. As throughout the interview the victim's

mother kept saying that her daughter would have been alive if they did not give her away in marriage. Her interest towards studies also made it unlikely that she willingly tied the knot as her father had said,

“Mae dees yer shupaeya ghar thay moshot paraigsil tou ash adok jaik ne beyes kae. Aki busy beyeskae, wesae demag tazaah churaiskae. Wes wesset muxhot parokae khawab purro ne thaik ba.”

“If my daughter had continued her studies after her first marriage nothing like this would have happened. This would have kept her busy, kept her mind fresh. But they did not let her fulfill her dream of studying.”

Additionally it can also be inferred that the victim might have agreed on marrying only if she continued her studies even after marriage, which never happened as her mother-in-law, from the first marriage, locked up her books in a box and told her to stay home. Her father further expressed,

“Shurue garae timeor daswee classor asil ba. Okor ho wesae sushs se moshot parok phat ne thaik ba, puri kitaabae haari sandokor band thay kulub thaik ne. (___) ba got phat thay bujamis thay ga raeegin ba. Lakin wesset wes kon ne degan, jab k mas aki maganiyey timeor sum thay aki iltaja tha sos k parok da inniset muxhot, or wes sho ga thaik sel obil. Bus (___) naukriet bujae khin aki phatt ne thaik na.”

“The first wedding time she was in 10 class. That time her mother-in-law had stopped her from going to school and kept all her books in box and locked. (Name of the victim) then even threatened to leave the house. But they did not listen to her, whereas at the time of engagement I very clear had requested them to let her study to which they agreed at that time and as soon (name of victims husband) left for his job his parents did not let her go”

This seemed to hit her hard, as if she had been betrayed, upon this she was said to be quite infuriated and even threatened to leave the house instead. Here, the father also showed anger how the husband's family did not keep their promise, correspondingly saying that there should be such institutions tackling and keeping a control whether promises made on marriages are kept or not, making the argument more stronger. The victim's sister also kept repeating how much interest she had in studies and wanted to continue too, further mournfully expressing how after getting married as promised her husband's family did not let her continue her studies. Discontinuation of her studies also seemed to have some negative impact.

Early marriages have also been a cause of suicides in the literature, over burdening the person with more responsibilities than they can actually take. Getting intolerant towards petty household matters, it seemed that she was not ready to get married, as she was only in 10th grade when she married. When asked was not she too young to get married his father's response was that its

normal in village life also boasting that he had asked the family to support her and let her continue with the studies after marriage. When she was not even mature enough to start a family, things started to pile up on her. This uncle also agreed saying,

“...kesett ha chal ghar thok ne awajae jae...”

“...One should not get married at a young age...”

Furthermore, the time when she came, a day before the main event, to her parents’ house it seems that an argument might have had happened between the husband and wife as the victim’s mother recall that she was quite worried and came back again just after three days. When she had come home at night and her husband did not even stay at their home hence after dropping her he went to his cousins home where he stayed the night. And did not come in the morning either and her sister goes on saying,

“... () 3 4 baar waa thay call thae khin ga ayak chut watt baa...”

“... Even after (name of the victim) called him for 3 4 times to come, he still came late...”

The second marriage also added some additional burden, as she was already disturbed and was still facing issues she should not have married the second time so soon. With many undesirable events, on the last day it looks like she wanted him to be there but a nonconforming behavior from his husband, might have intensified the situation. An amalgam of all the above mentioned factors with seemingly failed second marriage seemed to work as a final push over the cliff.

4.6. Case 6

This case is of a 49 years old man who had hanged himself from a tree in his own yard. Considering the no of cases, the youth is more indulged in suicide and related action as compared to this age category. The victim has 3 sons and 2 daughters, the sons are all in the army while one of his daughter is married and the other one is studying.

According to his wife, he was all good the day it happened. After breakfast he changed his cloths and wore everything new, he went with his granddaughter to drop her off at her tutor and then never came back. Later before night his body was found hanging and the family was informed. His middle son had come on vacations at that time, otherwise it was just the attempter, his wife and the youngest daughter at home. He was a retired army man himself and the family was living off of his own pension as well as through his son’s incomes, so financially they were quite stable and never had to face any problem relating to it.

A few months back the attempter met an accident where his right hand fingers were chopped off in the thresher doing his neighbor’s *Manae*¹⁰. This event is known to be the reason behind this suicide, his family and neighbor all agreed to it being the sole reason. It had such a huge impact

¹⁰ It is an event of harvesting. Where the locals gather and turn by turn help each other with separating the grain from the harvest with tools and machinery.

that according to his wife he had even stopped going to his daughter's home and would feel embarrassed shaking hands with people. According to his wife,

"...bus ae haguye cut ben khin kanu gottet ga ne bujosol lash bae. Das doket ga lush besol. Mas aksar wesset ramisis, 'Haguye ten sum hen, k lush ben? Ho vos rasol, 'Awa, bus anis lush tharenun'. Muti jaik ga ne. Tom malit ga hator bochi dok phatt ne thesol aa waqae jo phatu 'Bus bus ne thay' rae hath xash the sol"

"...it was just that after his fingers were cut off, he would not go to anyone's house, he use to get shy. Shaking hands would make him shy. I would often say to him, 'Your fingers are fine now why do you get so shy?' then he would say, 'yes, it just makes me shy'. There was nothing else. He would not even let his mother to kiss on his hand after the accident and would saying 'No No don't' and he would pull his hand back."

His neighbor portrayed him as the most humble man in the neighborhood, and the type of person who always greets people and even strangers with a smile on his face. The neighbor also asserted how much shock and pain this new had brought to the neighborhood, further classifying his behavior towards the family as 'commendable'. The neighbor had said,

"bus aik kutek hen mae ga wesae gotto majaa, tou asae lae aki meeshin. Aik se akot tik ga shanosis. Heeyey lao aki misto asil, gash tou jaik kare kurok they fashad thae khin ga ne pashesh. Jaik ga pareshani ne aki asil ne wessae zindagior ane haguyo elawa, dares lae aki misti thenesel or lae aki sum asil be mali lihazech."

"There is only a wall between his house and mine, so we were really much connected to each other. We would often share food with each other. What was really good from heart, I had never seen him getting into even argument let alone getting onto fights. There was nothing disturbing in this life accept for losing his fingers, his sons were doing great and they were quite good financially as well."

He had never portrayed that he would do something like this, he was so full of life, according to his family. They had not even a slightest clue that they would experience anything like this from the victim's side. His wife regards him as the most 'humble' and 'down to earth' personality,

"Shudaro sath shudar asil tou barro sath barro..."

"He was a kid with the kids, and an adult with the adults..."

Further highlighting how good of a husband and father he was, 'there were no fights at home, no bad talks even' and he never used a foul language for his wife or his children. But the hand without fingers made him tensed, according to his wife

"...vos rasol ba "Ani haguye cut benejo phatot, anu hath se masla theon.' Ano waqae bokojo yarr vos chawal khosh aki ne thesol lakin waqae jo pahtot chawal aki khasol chamachae sath. Ana aki bus aik waja hen, mutti jaik na ne asil wesset maslaay zindagior."

“...he would say ‘After the fingers getting cut, this hand is creating problems’. Before the incident he did not like rice, but after the incident he preferred rice and ate with the spoon. That is the only reason, there was nothing else troublesome in his life.”

Though he would not complain much to his wife about his hand, because of her health problems, as much as he had expressed his feeling to others. According to his neighbor the victim would often say to other people that no doubt the hand is fine now, but the fingers still give him trouble.

4.7. Case 7

The following case, starting from this, will be that of suicide attempts. No matter how hard we try to elicit some information related to a suicide, no one else can give a better picture as compared to someone who has been through it and somehow managed to survive. Of course there is a tendency that the attempter can lie or try to hide things for whatever the reason but as we move on with the cases we will try to incorporate a conclusion keeping all the factors and viewpoints involved. The suicide attempter in this case is a girl who was 17 years old when she tried to take her own life.

The attempter in this case took some random pills of her mother, which she could not remember specifically. This all started when at dinner time she was told that her father had arranged her marriage with someone. When the news was revealed to the attempter she instantly backed off and clearly declared her verdict but when they did not seem to listen to her she got infuriated and hence attempted suicide the next day. According to the attempter’s motive, she said that she really got infuriated at her parents behavior on getting her married and took this step to give her parents a threat or to scare them off so that they do not marry her away. It is not that she did not want to get married but according to her it was too early and that she wanted to continue her studies too. She further goes on by saying,

*“...mas soch thais k yarro kech jaik be bujum aye jaikek bil tou. Mae zehn parhae war aki asil,
ho achank adok morrek wae khin bus*

“... I thought how I would go to my friends if something like this happens (marriage). My mind was towards studies, then suddenly such talk came up so...”

Before this act she tried to convince her parents through dialogue to wait some more years as she did not even receive her 8th grade’s result. And her personal preference was also to complete her studies, get a job, be independent and then maybe, she thought, she would be ready to get married. She says she got quite upset with it, not registering the fact that his father is giving her away without any consent of her own.

Apart from being under pressure from her family she was also emotionally caged to give marriage a thought, as even after the attempt they could not back out. The man she was supposed to get married had good ties with her family and they were even financially indebted to him, as in an accident her father was badly injured which caused a financial burden on them, that man had helped her father through all the hospital bills hence becoming a helping hand in need.

Her father had already said yes to that man. With all the help and being a relative as well, the father could not say no to him. Even after the attempt she did not succeed as his father blatantly claimed it to be a matter of his honor, hence leaving her no option to retreat from getting married now.

With all the mixed thoughts going on in her mind, she also thought about societal reaction. The way people will react if she, a girl, opposes her father's decision and says no after a yes. She even quoted an incident where a women in her neighborhood was badly portrait when she opposed her family's decision and tried to go against them, saying people started talking bad about her, becoming a talk of the town. She even was afraid that her no would cause her a problem later on,

"...Phatut ga tou maslay benun ne, ais ga ho ma tang thok benun ne..."

"...There are problems again later, they can even try to distress me (the man or his family)..."

In between the thoughts of what to do and what not to do, she attempted suicide when she got into an argument with her father the night before the attempt day. The dominant behavior from his father said to be triggering point in this case, the attempter throughout the interview kept saying how much her father loved her and cared for their needs, openly admitting that her mother was rather a strict one, and would scold now and then. But when she received the same behavior from his father, it shook her to her very core, thinking about it she felt really angry and took the pills.

The attempter did not really had to go through the behavioral changes of her family or friends. As according to her nobody knew about it except for her parents, siblings and cousin, and hence the response was less and she did not feel agitated going out and meeting people. Though a few week she stayed home and avoided going out only because of her own emotional upheaval, and thinking how badly she might have hurt her parents. Further saying that family reaction mattered more to her as compared to what others would say, further saying.

"zahir hen bil ba rox, sam thay morr aki ne thok bam ae babos. Kamek waqt ginigo morett kar magar mat jag se jaik raan asae ayak fikr ne been. Bus ajee ga babae chuno morr ga lao khacho Dijon..."

"Of course they got angry, my father did not openly talked to me. It took him some time to talk but I do not care what others might have thought. But surely, even small things from parents hurts a lot..."

When the event occurred she was with her sister at home, who was stitching cloths in the next room and she was the initial help who then called her brother from office. It was her younger sister who was of particular help to her, making sure she was safe and was not thinking much about what had happened. But it is good now she says, the marriage was not called off but she

did get a chance to study emphasizing that she is happily married and thank that she had ‘escaped bad talks and dirty looks of society’ which she could have faced if she had said no.

But of course it would have been better if in the first place she was not given away in marriage. Here she did not really had an option and could not really decide what to do, lingering on from thought to thought. But she also shares that she still misses that time and thinks that she should not have married so early, as she has been burdened with so many responsibilities when she was just a ‘kid’ herself. Further going on by saying that all she had to think about was herself and the future, but now her life did not matter at all as now she has a baby girl to take care of. She further claimed that,

“...ayak chunni asilis matt lail aki ne asil, lae roxor asil ne bus. Agar lail asil k jaik ga ne bae tou mas khas gole khamishs aki ne shuruor aki. Ten bus mae zindagi ana, mae dee aki hen. Ten bus mae koshish hen, ma kono guzra bilinis anaa aye be guzra ne bot.”

“... being so young I really did not know what I was doing, I was just angry. If I had known nothing will change, chances are I might never have never eaten the pills in the first place. Now this, my daughter, is my life. Now I have to make sure she does not go through what I have gone through”

It is fortunate enough that the attempter somehow survived but a mere forced marriage almost took a life, what is more painful is that even after the failed attempt she was still given away in marriage to the same person within a year of attempt.

4.8. Case 8

This case is of a boy who is the eldest among the 5 siblings and had just completed the studies (2nd year) when this incident took place. His father works as a farmer and earns his livelihood through it. With no major source of income, his father had always huge expectations from this son to start to work soon and be a helping hand for his father. The attempter was aware of this and new really well that soon he has to help his father, he already had been helping his father side by side on the fields as well and would single handedly look after the family cattle too.

This incident took place in the day time, so according to the attempter he was playing Ludo with his family, including his cousins and uncles who had come from abroad, when his parents came and started scolding him in “front of everyone” for wasting his time on such games. He got quite embarrassed and after quietly finishing the game went outside the house in the nearby field and shot himself in the stomach. The presence of everyone there made him humiliated and his cousins kept on teasing him making him angrier.

“Mat lail aki nush jaikk bil tou...Turmak asil mae roomor aki, khele jo baad khul roomet gas, turmak gini ado daroot nikhatos. Mae maa malot gal ail ne asil jaik thok dasos tou...”

“I really do not know what had happened... The gun was there in my room too, I went to my room after the game, took out the gun and went out. Even my parents did not know what I was about to do...”

When his family heard of the fire they came running towards the field. And there they saw him splashed in blood and half conscious.

“...Mah gottae phatu aki charekor asilos. Turmakae awaaz kon de aki wat pure daroot, wanu khayal kon mas ako de maras thaigen. Lakin mae yayo ja agi watos gotte war.”

“...I was just behind the house in a field. My whole family came out hearing the gun shot, they thought I have killed my self. But I came walking towards the house.”

He only remembers his mother’s sorrowful wailings before he passed away completely. Of course this was a serious case and he had to go through several procedures before he was completely fine. With such a serious case it was difficult to allocate a feasible hospital as well, mainly due to the poor or inadequate facilities in small towns and hence they had to rush him to the main city hospital. They took him to the operation theater for almost five times, according to the attempter. Further he says

“...yarr shupor singalet hareek ma gin ho ado healthet hareek ho askhrior ate Dr. _____ ho oss gay operation kamyab tharok. Lae serious asilos mae”

“...First I was at the Singul hospital then they took me to the health (hospital) and then finally to Dr. ____ (name) who made the operation successful. I was quite serious.”

Not only did his parents scold him he was also teased and made fun by his cousins afterwards, which worked as adding fuel to the already blazing fire. His stance was that no matter his parents were right and had all the right to scold him or whatever but they should not have reprimanded him in front of the whole family there and his cousins’ reaction only made the situation worse making him angry. It was just a fun game, he says, gathering the whole family and nothing that serious had happened that worried them so much. It appears that he took it as an insult and went a little over board.

“...Galti chalo thae ga beyun or agar thais tou ga ganti kamaz kam butino moxho tou ne karatot ne.”

“...If we might have committed a mistake and even if we commit a mistake then they should not really scold us in front of everyone.”

Apparently, he was more ashamed of getting insulted in front of his other family members than getting scolded from his parents. Further continuing on with the interview in trying to elicit if this was the only reason he says other people are saying that he had others reasons but it was nothing else, he admits, just that day and that instant moment led him to such an act. Throughout the interview he depicted a very emotional personality and also admitted it quite a few times as

well. He also said that his reactions were mostly impulsive and could not take the insult. Also the cousins and uncle were guests at his home for a temporary time period, and the cousins were his age fellows so he really took the harsh words.

The moment was so instant that he really did not know what he was about to do and throughout the interview he kept on saying “I do not know what had happened” or “what I was thinking”. But afterwards he sure was shocked to realize as he had said,

“kare sochek ga ne Thasos k mas adok ga jaikek tham”

“I had never thought I would do anything like this ever”

After the event he did not even “go near to the hospital” due to all the flashbacks not even to open up the stiches, he says. The gun with which he took his life was his own and when asked why he kept a gun? Very proudly he mentions that his whole family keeps guns and it has been with them for ages and so he gets to keep one too. And he kind of seemed proud that he had use a gun then other suicidal methods also it was more an instant response, and as he already had a gun he went ahead with it. He only seem to recall that his thoughts were to end his own life rather than arguing with his family or even fighting with them and do not remember being afraid of the act or having any second thoughts about it. Further he goes on by saying that,

“Mae ne khayal been k mas jaik sochek thae aye thasos. Bush ta mae aru jaik achit sol, ten soch thas tou mat yaad ne waan jaik sochek asil tan thokojo yar. Bush ta per, magar mae henozi roxato, tou shayid achanak ayecho aki aye bil.”

“I do not think if I had thought much about doing it. I do not know what had gotten into me, now that I think of it I could not remember my thoughts before pulling the trigger. I do not know, but I am mostly very angry, so this might explain my instant outburst.”

His relationship with the family was the same as before and did not had to face any kind of unwanted behavior from family or friends particularly after this event. But he is aware that his parents were definitely hurt and disappointed but they really did not show rather they grew more attached towards him and show more concern now. After the event the attempter contemplated quite often and realized that he had made a mistake regretting the event, also mentioning it as the only unfavorable occurrence in his life and demanding such acts should not be encouraged at all cost. Now owing a shop his life is smooth and he do not look back on that track again. At one instance he had also mentioned that

“...Aye tou awalshupur thok aki ne awajae, phatu ho peshtawaa beyun jay.”

“...Such acts should not be carried out in the first place, we regret it afterwards.”

This very much strengthens the point that it was not preplanned or even thought of properly before fully going on with it hence merely an act out of absolute anger at that particular time, making it more of a prompt violent action. Also from the interview it looks like the attempter did

not really intended to kill himself but it was rather more like an alarm or warning to his parents for what they have done. The attempter also acknowledges the influence this event might have on others and for elimination, he suggests that it won't be easy and possible unless people realize how wrong this step is. He further regretfully mentions that he's afraid he might as well have stimulated one of his neighbors who shot himself too and died.

4.9. Case 9

This interview was conducted almost 2 months after the sad event took place. The attempter is a 23 year old girl with three siblings, two brothers and a sister. As she was in the kitchen room watching T.V with her grandmother, the victim's mother entered and asked her to go teach a neighbor's girls who had been asking if the attempter can teach their little daughter. As she was getting ready and was about to leave the house the attempter's father came in and told her wife not to let her go anywhere. Her mother taking her side started to argue with her father, while they were arguing, the father "said a wrong thing" to her, which she could not tolerate, went to the store room and hanged herself.

"Bus o mor mae heeyet gar seedha, ayak mae tensed bilis ne k sochek ga ne waatsil k mae adeek ga jaikek tham thay."

"The words hit direct my heart, I was so tensed that moment that I never had thought that I would do anything like this."

As simple this may seem, it is equally deep rooted and twisted. This definitely was not the only reason of course, but it sure worked as a final push. Being an area which is not fully developed yet and still gets a lot of pressure from the outside world if a women works or even talk their minds out, seemed to somewhat play its role in this case too. And apart from that, this case is an example of how the family's reaction to those talks can lead to such tragedies. That, at least in this case, was every effective which let a girl to attempt suicide. Especially if that person has a sensitive nature like the one on this case, as she had said,

"Chunne morror gam ae lae aki tensionor bujamisis or bus soch thoja beyamisis. Ade be aki ho kos jaik raek tou ga jaik ne ramisis chup thamisis"

"Even on a small matter I would be extremely tensed and would think about it a lot. Likewise, if anyone would scold me I do not say anything and would remain silent."

The attempter started off by narrating how her whole week was like,

"...chal roxor bujamisis chune moror or o daisaeshak ma lae tensed asilis. Mae bemar ga bilsis, tus ra tou jaik heeyich wazon churegen thay. Muti kos mor thokae koshish thaik tou, mae zarox ya maa malos, jawab dou kae gar ae ne wasil seeda mukh gin mor thokae ga rae ne wasil. Chuno morrek ga thaik tou ma tensed bamisis or lae rox wasil. Obil ga puro daiz sae asilis, kare khudkhushi thais obil"

“...I use to get angry on petty matters and that day I was really tensed too. I even got ill, it was as if I had a huge weight on my heart. Also if anyone tried to talk to me, my brothers or my parents, I did not wanted to reply them, or even talk to them with a straight face. And even a small talk from them would make me really tensed and I use to get really angry. That particular day I slept the whole time, the day when I committed suicide.”

This feeling was caused by multiple factors which will be discussed under one by one, hence a few reasons, altogether, led to this act. Starting off with the very first it seems that she had been comparing herself with her sister and friends, comparison in terms of educational attainment. Fighting all the odds, the attempter's younger sister had enrolled herself in a university, even when her parents were not happy and did not deemed a girl's education so important. But since the young sister is very bold and outspoken she convinced them. According to the victim,

“Ajjee aki bejin wesset. Was dhamkiye ga deen wanott, or rox ga been k wes khali ballo parhaeck kharcha thaygen or asot ne thaygen thay.”

“Even my mother's afraid of her (sister). She threatens them (parents) too, and get angry that they have only invested on our brother's education and not on ours.”

The attempter on the other hand could not convince her parents to support her in getting education and stayed home instead doing the household chores. She throughout the interview expressed her desire and wish for further studies, by comparing herself to her age fellow and friends, who are enrolled in universities and colleges. But her 'parents did not even allow her to do short diploma courses', making her feel being left out and stranded. She did try to fight back for her education but due to her considerate and refined manners she could not do much and kept silent, in a very docile manner she continued saying,

“Ten har aikae aik khwaish been ne, ten tom yaari chakok been ne kes niversitior parenun. Mas ga aye bum thamis. Tou mas kare ano jo mor ga tham aisae barar thais tou raan, 'was jaik mistic thae.'”

“What happens is everyone has a wish, we see our friends who study in universities and colleges. I wish to be like them too. So even if I tried to talk to them (parents) about it (Studying/Education), they would say, what good is it.”

Another very important element in this case is her parent's attitude. Her parents seemed to be very strict and close minded, and she also depicted herself to be quite distant from them. With the type of nature she possesses, she finds it difficult to portray her feelings to them and they did not seem to show any concern either. No doubt children have a soft spot for their parents and vice versa, but here the attempter with a sad tone narrated,

“...Mus ho ba tom ajae ga soch thamis ne k aik bay phat bae thay gottae komo sath. Mat ayak ga fikr hen tom maa malae lakin wanott jaik ga soch nush na mae na mae khwaisho.”

“...But then I think about my mother too, she would be alone with all this household work. I’m so concerned about my parents but they do not seem to think about me and my wishes.”

This very much distresses a child no doubt, and same happened to be the case with this attempter. Even though, she says, her mother takes their side at times and is ‘nicer’ than her father, she too does not really understand the attempter and instead, at times, be the cause of her tension,

“...Ten mae ajis jaik aik kacho komek mamigin tou khul phat ne thae asanigin, bus khul moz boshing a chuni galti ya khacho waqae dolraya tho bujae. Tou ajae ae morri khul repeat bo bujenun or demaget weyoja bujin khache mori, kes ge douga tang atarenun.”

“...But my mother, she does not let go of any bad behavior that easily, she would keep on bragging about a little mistake or that bad event for months. So my mother keeps on repeating and pushing bad things which go to our mind and that makes me feel more miserable.”

Also her mother had been suffering from an illness which has made her left eye blink a lot more than the normal, she held the attempter liable to be the cause behind her illness, making her depressed by blaming her every time she makes even a small mistake.

“Ajis rasil k, ‘thae wajaj mae ade bilinis’. Wa tou yar bilis jay kayak saal yarr or mae wajaj ne bilsil.

“She (mother) would say, ‘It is because of you that I have become like’. But this happened to her many years ago and is not because of me.”

On the other hand, her father being a shopkeeper stays out for long and spends more time with every other person of the village hearing and discussing things. His attitude, she says, has changed a lot and was not like this. She recalls him to be her ultimate support but he is not any more, as she recollects,

“...hamesha rasol k kare phatot khech be ne beya ya phatot khech ne ba or hemesha moxhot zakk thesol be...”

“... He would say never to get back or never to sit back and had always pushed us forward...”

But things seems to change as the sisters got older and now when they needed the most support he held back. The attempter claims that her father easily gets influenced by what others say and is always afraid of the issues that arise in our society thinking his daughters might do something similar too, like affairs etc. She also thinks that people might have incited him about the bad things the youth is involved in. But that does not mean, she says, that they would do something bad too, the attempter suggesting that instead he should discuss it with them at home. She further advocates that even if something is triggering him or if had heard something bad about her, she was even ready to get beaten by her father or even get slapped, but he did not clear anything and kept imposing restrictions. He should clear out things, she says, and is even ready to be grounded

if he finds she had done anything wrong. That unfavorable day, her mother had come to her saying that she might have done something bad which her father now knows about, hence all the restrictions. Here, she blames the society/ neighbors for this strictness from her parents but that does not mean, she asserts, that parents stop trusting their kids and listen more to what others think.

When her father was being told about the incident, he couldn't really believe, and had said,

"...as dubeyes mae jaik ga thaenun, was tou adeek ne thae"

"...They both (wife and attempter) are just fooling me, she cannot do it."

She was not like this before but things seem piled up on her. The news spread like a fire in the forest and even the police came to the hospital for investigation, but they were dodged saying that she just fainted due to weakness and nothing else. As she opened her eye in the hospital she felt tickling pain in her feet, while putting together what had happened. For a second the thought gushed her mind that with all that had happened, she was still alive and now she had to face every one in the village.

"Phato raeek k pure att storor jama bilsel thay."

"They (Family) later told me that everyone was gathered around in the store."

Of course the wound is still fresh and she has not got over it. She is aware that everyone in the village knows about it and might even be talking and discussing her too.

"...harek ket lail hen ae bush ten tou, ten anot tou lail nush ne asel der keh billin thay, tou ho ten wes akot akot murri aten tom demag k jo. Ho lush thareen ba daroot ga bujok."

"...I think everyone knows what I had done, they do not know what actually had happened so they might be talking about everything that came to their mind. Now I feel ashamed going out"

This thought definitely triggers her, making her depressed and further tensed. Since it has been just 2 months, without doubt, being in such a vulnerable state, she needs care and constant support from her family. Unluckily, her parents remain the same even after the event, according to the attempter, still fighting and cursing each other, without realizing that other people might be there too.

"...Ten ga ayak jaik bokae bawajood ae dubeyye aye kaki hen, aye kaki jay, kamek ga jaik farqek ne watin anukech. Ten tou morr thok ga rae ne waan ano sathi."

"...Still with all that had happened they both (parents) are same, they are the same, and there is not even a slight change in them. And now I even do not want to talk to them."

Now that unfavorable things had happened, she really wishes if she was dead the moment she hung herself. With teary eyes the attempter wishes,

“...Ten ga mas soch thais anesae barrar tou mas ten ga ramis k ajee ne waishta roomet, ma bachat ne thaeskae.”

“...Now that I think about this incident I really wish my mother would not have entered the room and saved me.”

When she saw her parents fighting in the street near their house, and cursing each other as well, she could not compose herself. She got filled with anger and as if her mind totally blacked out as she tried to hang herself up. She does not remember anything after that just the screams of her mother as she pulled her down. With so much that has happened, instead of being careful, this unsympathetic behavior can be very dangerous, once again risking the attempter's life. Throughout the interview she did not seem to have any positive comments about her parents or about their behavior towards her after the event, her sibling were more concerned comparatively. Specially, her elder brother who gave her some hope, and the attempter talked about him as if there was at least someone she could restore her faith on.

“...O puro mox mae xha mae sath aki beth mat tik khayaroja. Bujokor mat naseehat thay gao k soch ne thay anisae barrar dubara or ayega rayok k mae sath dae har timeor. Or chal aki ma gini anao harrae.”

“...The whole month my brother set by my side and feeding me food. Upon leaving he advised me never to think about it again and he also said that he would be with me all the time. And would soon take me away from here.”

She was happy that her brothers are such a moral support and seeing their concerned towards her really made her lit up. She was not really looking for some huge promises but just a few words of empathy. She is not hopeful about her parents, neither did she seem to expect anything more from them, but of course she is tensed about it. Gladly her brothers are doing the right thing and she seemed to be quite positive towards them, as she very gladly narrated that her younger stepped up and threatened her parents to have killed himself too if she had died. If even her sibling did not showed any care or if she was not positive towards them, things could really go wrong as she had said,

“Zindagi anise jo yar mishti asil ne, ten tou kese jo morr ga ne thamis.”

“Life before this event was better, now I do not even talk to anyone.”

But due to her brothers she sees the future with some hope, and tries to forget what had happened. But, after the event she has limited herself to the home and does not go out much fearing that she will have to face people's gaze and their questions. She also further goes on by saying that,

“Ten ga mas daroot bujam thamis, sum tyar shele bnai, sum be sujam thamis ba jago muri wanun k waa chakaa, ‘Ana mulai se ako de marek sil ten na nun yanin nawaar wawaar’. Asae jago mori khache hen ne, tou rae ga ne waan daroot bujok ya jaik thokae.”

“But I now try to go out, I really feel like dressing up and looking good but then I think about people saying look, ‘That is the one who committed suicide and now she is walking here and there’. Our people talk bad, so I do not feel like going or doing anything either.”

This really describes that she wants to get back to her previous normal life, but some things are not in her control. Apart from regretting that she is still alive she really does not seem to repeat it again as she is still hopeful that her brothers, if not her parents, would support her and as they have promised that she will continue her studies once she is mentally and physically relaxed and ready to venture on.

4.10. Case 10

This victim was only 16 years of age when she ate more of her own high dose pills. She had a broken ankle due to which doctors had prescribed her a high dose of pills. I know her personally as well and it was a shock that a girl like her could do something like this. She is one of the most active girls I have known, in an environment where being vigorous and energetic for a girl is not much appreciated, she always made sure that she was being noticed ignoring what others had to say. Always participating in school functions and being in the forefront.

But after hearing her story it all came to the point and every act that she did made sense, of course not saying that the act in any way can be normalized and appreciated. But of course the factors can be studied and minimized for future precautions.

So as I have said she is very active, the day before she attempted suicide she had an argument with her father where he wanted her to go to a wedding with them where as she on the other hand wanted to attend a youth camp. She tried hard to convince him, she even “cried very much” that night and dozed off to sleep, but could not do much. His father again brought up the topic in the morning when she was getting ready for the school and told her to take the leaves for the wedding as there is no chance that he is allowing her to go to the camp. She left the home in full anger eating extra pills, as she walked her friend noticed that her nose was bleeding but they both kept walking thinking it was a common nosebleed. Though the attempter knew why it was happening and “fear also gusted through” her not long before she fainted to the ground when the pills started their effect

“...mera sara uniform agay se ghoon mae latpat tha, jese kisi ne pani pehnka ho. Mae phr b chalti gae or jab class mae pohncchi tou mujhe yahn se dhanda feel hua, mae baat he nae kr saki na he kuch bol saki... mere mun se sirf ‘pills’ or mujhe ‘pani dou he’ niklay. Uss k baad mujhe yaad nae kya hua mere sath.”

“...and my whole uniform from the front was in blood, as if someone has splashed water on me. I kept walking and when I reached my class I started to feel as if I was freezing from here (indicating legs), I could not talk much, could not say anything... I could only utter ‘pills’, ‘give me water’. And then I do not know what had happened.”

The whole school gathered around her and she was rushed to the nearest hospital. After a few hours she was brought back to consciousness,

“...kuch seconds k liye mere khayal, se mae ne socha k mae zindah he hun and uss k baad wo sara time mae bus sakte mae thi. Nurses ati ja rae thi or mujhe sunna b rae theen, lakin mae tou khud khoyi hue thi apne... mujhe nae pata, mujhe tou kuch feel he nae ho raha tha.”

“...for a second, I think, I thought that I was alive and after that, the whole time in the hospital I was numb. Nurses were coming and going giving me lectures, but I was lost in my own... I do not know, I just could not feel anything.”

Being the most outspoken girl she was totally unable to convey her feelings properly. This particular interview really needed a deep scrutiny as every question led to a different view point. At one time she blamed the strict behavior of her father for not letting her go to the camp and rather forcing her to go with them on a wedding in another town, while she also seemed to be angry for not giving her “attention” as her father constantly ignored her interest in the camp and that is why no one was willing to stay back at home with her,

“...Ab mae ne nae jana tha q k mujhe tou camp mae jana tha and wo usse bar bar ignore kr rae thay, camp ko, jidr mae ne jana tha. Ab jab har koi shadi pe ja raha tha tou mujhe akele b chor nae sakte thay ghar pe. Tab phr mujhe ghussa aya k bhae mere liye koi q nae ruk raha, tab phr mae ne golian khaen or ye sub hua. Mae itna frustrate ho gae thi na un se.”

“...I did not wanted to go (to wedding) as I wanted to go to the camp and he (father) was constantly ignoring the camp where I wanted to go. But since everyone was going to the wedding they could not leave me alone at home either. I got angry that why is not anyone staying for me, so I ate the pills and all this happened. I was so frustrated from them.”

She without any hesitation also mentioned how our society tries to “over pressurize” and try to “control the kids” which in return negatively effects their dreams and wishes. Further relating this to her own experiences she also expressed how the society also coerces the parents which further strengthen the sternness in their behavior towards the kids. She recounts,

“...Yes! Mae tou bolungi krti hai society pressurize humae. Agar tumhare apne waleeden b allow krte hain na tumhe kisi cheez k liye, tou tumhara apna cousin he uth k against mae bolay ga ya koi or teesra band kuch burra bolayga uss k barre mae. Tou wo log khuh b pressure mae ajate hain, or akhir mae baat b phr wo unhe ki manengay tumhari nae.”

“...Yes! I would say our society pressurizes us. Even if your parents are allowing you for something, your own cousin would speak up against it or any other third person would say something bad about it. So they (parents) are pressurized too, and eventually they will listen to them not you.”

She has also been facing problems regarding her education too, which she seemed to hide from me. This is what is known to be the reason in the whole town, as one of her school teacher, who happens to be my neighbor, also offered to support the girl for her further educational expenses, but his father turned it down saying it was not her problem to be so considerate. The teacher had said,

“Aisae gottae ayak jaik sum be nush ne, babo wesae driverek jaikek hen thainun. Tou wess bus schoole jo nikhalon thak ne, ade schoolae mulaeis ranesel. Wessae yaarek se aki matt ade raek khujam khin.”

“Her family is not so well off, her father is I think a driver or something, so they decided that she will soon be taken out of school that is at least what the girls at school, her friends actually said to me when I asked about it.”

Her teacher further complimented how bright she is and that even the school teachers were willing to support her educational expenses and they already had talked to the principal as well. But her father took it the wrong way and even the victim’s behavior towards the teacher had changed too, says the teacher.

Being an active person she has a wide social circle and she had to deal with the same number of backlash too. Of course it was not easy at first and she use to get quite depressed at what other had said about her and since it all happened at her school in a public space it “was as if everyone had got the license to make stories now”. But with the passage of time everything got settled, and ignoring all the talks made it easier for her to make more ‘peace’ with her own self. She had to cut down her social interactions and gatherings, which was no easy for her and it was kind of a ‘mental torture’ for her, but that has helped her a lot too in realizing her mistake. She further says,

“That one year was so heavy on me, so heavy. Mae bahir b itna nae gae. 4th position hoti thi wahn lakin uss saal mae 1st ayi pura time ghar rehne ki waja se.

“That one year was so heavy on me, so heavy. I did not even go out much. I used to be on the 4th position but I came 1st that year due to staying inside the home all the time...”

Like in most of the cases the victims in this case also asserted her father to be quite strict and due to his blood pressure and heart problem he “would get angry on everyone at home even on small matters”, so this news was supposed to be hidden from him but someone has already broke the news to him. Her whole family was shocked, and now their reaction is totally changed towards her she says,

“...uss case k baad ab wo ehtiyaat krte hain k ab koi gunjaish b nae hai galti krne ki. Ab mujhe ghusaa na aye keh k bhott mohtaad rehte hain.”

“...After that case they (parents) are more careful that there is no chance of making another mistake. They are so careful now that they make sure I would not angry.”

She claims that apart from her own realization if it was not for the changed behavior of her parents it “was not difficult to attempt again”. With the concern from her parents, a few close friends, it really made her comprehend that she was not only about to make her own life end but would have made the lives of her loved ones miserable.

“...ab wo kehte hain k mae he sub se strongest hun behn bhaeyon mae...”

“...They (parents) now even say that I am the strongest among all the sibling...”

She sees the future with a very positive attitude now, blatantly acknowledging that she did took a really ruthless step. But now she has forgotten the whole incident and she “rarely” thinks about it,

“...Wo halaat he kuch aise thay. Lakin ab jab jab sochti hun tou ehsas hota hai k haan galti ki hai.”

“...The circumstances were as such. But I feel it time to time that yes I had made a mistake.”

Now she is social worker and works in a local NGO and is also affiliated voluntarily with many other organizations as well. This whole interview was smooth and the level with which she participated is immense. She had also said,

“...Agar mera ye interview aik jaan b bachata hai tou mae apne app ko lackiest kahungi.”

“...If my interview even saves one single life than I would call myself the luckiest.”

4.11. Case 11

This case is of a 26 year old man who had committed suicide by eating pills. This incident occurred some 3 years ago when he was about to get married to his parent’s choice. He did not have any problem with the marriage but his fiancée’s brother-in-law seem to have.

Being the youngest son of his parents, he was living a lavish life, no pressure of any house work or any other responsibilities. He had willingly quit school after matric as ultimately he had to run the family business of gold jewelry shop. It was all good until his father thought of bringing his friends daughter as a bride for him and hence they were engaged in a small ceremony.

Things were all smooth so they sent a message to his fiancée’s family to get married. It had just been a month since they tied the knot in an engagement ritual, when out of nowhere his fiancée’s brother-in-law started opposing the marriage and went against the attempter talking and spreading bad rumors about him. Though the cause of this menacing behavior is still unclear, as the attempter narrates,

“...Ma khosh aki ne thesol a bush. Aik se aik suyunisis aki ne ba yar mat jaik asil wese jo. Bush ta ayak mae phatu k asil tou.”

“...he did not like me I guess. But we did not know each other before or I had nothing to do with him. I do not know why he was so after me.”

He started to give him warnings to back out of the marriage and even threatened that he will see how the attempter gets married to her and that it will never happen so the attempter better just give up. Upon this the attempter's father also decided to end the new relation, saying why to risk his son's life by getting married to her, as he would find another bride for him and anyone would be willing to give their daughter's hand to him. On this the attempter got really heated that just because someone else wants to end the relationship, they are actually going to do so. With all the pressure from his parents considering the threats and the thought of breaking his new relation at so young age, the attempter got infuriated and called his fiancée's father and told him,

"...tus tom dee akokech chure, mat ne awajin aa. Baki mas jaik thas tou tham.

"...you keep your daughter, I do not want her. I will do what I have to do..."

He did not do it willingly but he had no other option either. That day as he was just thinking about the matter and out of extreme tension, not realizing what he was about to do, he went to the market and bought some pills, though he did not name the pills but they sure were very strong he confessed. That particular day they had some guests over too. So he went ahead and started to serve the tea, as he had already taken the pills he was now experiencing dizziness and headaches, and all of sudden he stumble and hit the glass table and so he was rushed to the hospital. Where, apart from treating the effects of the pills he also had stiches on the head due to hitting the glass table.

His father's decision of ending the relationship really thwarted him, as he had said at least his father should have taken his side and together they would have done something about it.

"...Babos aye thae thay lail ne asil matt, babos tou shatt aki ato ne bus thay thay. Ten tus aki raa, mutok se ten dhamki dok tou jaik phatt thamae tom mangetar? Kayak buzdil harkatek hen..."

"...I was not expecting that (behavior) from my father, he actually forced me to end (the relation). Now you tell me, why would I leave my fiancée just because someone is threatening? That is such a coward act..."

He was not ready to let her go, he declares, and his father completely opposing the idea of marrying her, really left him melancholic and the situation made him really distressed.

"...Gottor kesset ga ne rayasos jay. Or tik mae xhe dezexho ne khayasos jay, xhe dexho, xhe dezexho tik khayasos aki ne jay..."

"... I did not tell anyone at home (That he's not happy with the decision of leaving her), nor did I ate any food for three days, for three days, for three days I did not eat food..."

When he was brought back to home from hospital his hands were shaking he was not proud of what he had done and seeing his parent's cry really made him realize what a big step he had taken.

“Gottet watos tou chakam khin mali reen or babo lao aki tang hen ho kamek ehsaz haek bil k khachiek thas ae bush thay, kare soch ga ne thasos jay adeek tham thay. Ma tou khachi cheezo war ga nushosh nay na kachi yaar dosti, ma lao farmabrdar puch, mae mallet ga khuje tus beshak. Bus aa aik lamha asil, okor gole khas, ne tou mas nasha ga ne thamos, cigarettetou hath ga ne dasonos...”

“When I came home seeing my mother cry and father depressed I really realized that I had done wrong, I never thought I would do anything like this. I am not into any bad things or company, and I am a really obedient son, you can even ask my father. It was that particular moment that I took the pills, I am not into drugs even, never have I ever touched a cigarette...”

His father did not say anything during his hospital days nor did he complaint on his action unlike his mother who kept saying he is ‘her everything’ and what she would have done if any bad had had happened to him. He too did not had the guts to face his father but the only time his feelings were more open was his wedding time,

“...Phatu shanti bnani waan khin do beye rolay ne. Ho sum bey aki kum billo ne, ado khul sum bill. Ghare jo yar tou lao roxor asil ne babo, ba akhira kayak boshin sum thay mor ne thaiska.”

“...They had teary eyes when they saw me wearing the *shanti*¹¹, he (father) hugged me really hard and was all good after that. My dad was really mad at me before the wedding but for how long could he not talk to me.”

Of course it was a great set back to the family, and the decision to call off the engagement was made to refrain from any undesirable outcome, in fact put his life in more danger. The mother fearing her son’s dear life, started to protest in his favor to bring home the same girls that he wants to marry. She was very fearful toward him, the attempter confesses and even today she doesn’t say no to what he says and has a more loveable attitude toward him. Later, the attempter’s father convinced the bride’s father to get the two married after the incident, completely ignoring her brother-in-law, which was of course difficult as he was part of her family. With all the threats still coming, it was such a sensitive situation that there were “2 police Datsun’s” at his wedding for security purposes, ready to encounter if her bother-in-law tries to abrupt the wedding or does anything wrong.

But with all the support of her and his own family, things got settled, family elders of the fiancée’s side gathered and made her brother-in-law realize that he had already made the attempters life miserable and now that they are married so he better end the “nonsense” and apologize to him.

“...phatto sathmoyi dee jaal ne mae, okor watsol hospitalet maafi ginok. Ado phatut khul sum henis ne.”

¹¹ Different rare bird feathers are placed together and attached to the white traditional cap worn specially by the groom on the wedding day. A beautiful symbol of culture often worn at big events or celebrations by the people of Gilgit.

“...later when my daughter was delivered at 7th month, he came to meet me at the hospital and apologized. Since then we are fine.”

He is now a father of two girls and has married the same girl, so things have changed a lot for him. He has moved on and ‘does not even get the time to even think about it, as now he has a family to support and daughters who are his strength.

“...khosh thokbash family har marzae dawa hen ne, ane jo phatu mae ne khayal k aik dezek ga khacho gaon mae. Bus ani aja aisae karam hen ne, tesionae jo door churok ma ho. Ten bus khushan be ghar thay anos, khosh thamos tom jamat ga depoch. Ten aawarett kos chakenun, ayaak tabdeeli watin. Ten tou aye na bill hayek been

“...a loving family is cure to every disease, after them (daughters) I do not think I even had a single bad day. It is all HIS different ways of blessing you and kept me out of tension. Now I am happily married, I love my wife and children. There is no looking back at the same path again, so many things have changed. It is almost as if that (suicide attempt) did not even happen.”

Accept for this one incident the victim has never indulged himself in any other form of harm. As he says his parents have always trusted him and they are even proud that his behavior with them has always been remarkable even his married life is going great. One thing similar in almost all the cases seem to be the role or behavior of the family and mostly how they have responded towards a certain act, has triggered such behaviors. But obviously not being the sole cause of the problem as in this case as well, the attempter rather showed an egoistic outlook too, to break the relationship with her fiancée. Again even when the family did not help but instead asked to call off the engagement the victim had no choice but to take of his own life out of resentment.

4.12. Case 12

This is the only case where the suicide was attempted due to a disability. The victim was 20 years old when the incident happened some 2 years ago, but the family, specifically his mother, do not accepted that anything like it had happened. To dig deep into this case at hand, the attempter and her mother were interviewed along with a neighbor as well to seek out the matter more clearly. Being from the same neighborhood myself, I have heard the story many times as well. And when I went for the interview, the mother tried to hide the incident as if it was a mistake but the neighbor who was also the rescuer revealed the underlying reality that the victim was in fact trying to commit suicide.

She was diagnosed with “sugar problem” in the fifth class when she started to face eye sight problems as a result of it, deteriorating to the point that she had to drop out of college. So she was taken out of school and since then she has been living at home doing house hold task with minimum visibility. This all must be really hard on her and out of anguish she had jumped into

the *Kuee*¹² but luckily there was not enough water and when the mother called for help from the neighbor she was timely rescued.

So when the victim's mother saw the door chain of the storeroom lose, she went inside to see her daughter floating and quickly went out to get some help. When asked the victim about the incident, her mother kept on interrupting as if she was afraid her daughter might commit to what she had done. It was strange that they were not accepting it, especially her mother, when the victim continually portrayed how miserable life she was living. As she had said,

"...Parhae misti hen ne...taleem se aki tou zindahi saneen ne. Ash billa ne paredeqae zindagi aki nush. Ten ma aan henis khul zinda lashakae sheeri, ade be k jalis ne?"

"...studying is good... education is what makes your life. Nowadays, there is no life of those who do not study. Now, I am just here like a dead body, why was I born like this?"

She really seemed to be concerned about two factors throughout the interview, one being the reason that she could not continue her education and secondly her own physical state. As she had said,

"...Mat tou har bae tension hen ne, mae zindagi aki tension hen tou. Ma khali dawaeoch zindah henis ba, mae suae ga hen ba, wega aki aki shamis. Aik taraf mae axhio elaaaj nush, wessae tension. Bus ae doctor muree ginni soch thoja henis ba."

"...I have tension all the time, my tension is my life itself. I am only living on my medication, I even have to use syringes and I inject them myself. On one side there is no treatment for my eyesight, this is a tension. I just keep recalling what doctors had said (that her weak eyesight cannot be cured)."

As the saying goes health is wealth, she also sees it as nothing less. It was a heart aching moments to see such beautiful girl so depressed and hopeless about her life. Being a single parent, her mother is the only source of support as well as happiness for her, as she seemed to be very attached to her as compared to her sister. As her mother says the victims wakes up in the middle of the night calling out for her, and her mother never said to have turned down any of the victim's wishes either. When I interviewed her neighbor who had rescued the victim told the actual story. According to the neighbor, the victim's younger sister had secured really good grades in her final examination because of which the school wanted to shift her to other main branch which is in another town hence this required her to shift to hostel. The victim on the suicide attempt day had argued with her mother not to let her sister leave home or go to a new school branch, on this the mother had scolded the victim that it is better for her sister's future and that nonetheless she gets very disturbed due to all the guests and household work so it is better

¹² It is a type of well but much narrower as it gets down and down. Being very common in the north every household individually owns one or two. It is basically built inside a huge room which is used for storing purposes by the villagers.

that she go. The argument had ended and everyone got engaged in their daily routine, while the victim reached out for the store room. As the neighbor says,

“Ayak tang asil ne aroo k wessae malis torch ge atek jab k roomae light asil jay. Kamek jaik hooshor asil tou lae aki muskiligin ajatt ate hospitalet zash theges. Yarejo lae nazuk haal ek pashe be pure bijeeles ba.”

“It was so dark inside that her mother had to bring the torch though the room light was on. She was half conscious and with great difficulty I had bought her up and we rushed to the hospital.

With her already sensitive health condition we all got really upset.”

Here the mother had told that she fell into the well by accident whereas the neighbor who had rescued her had said that it was not possible to fall into the well fortuitously. As according to him, the well was rather secured with a steel lid and only a small opening was made to pull out the water. He further went on to say that,

“Ten jag ayaak masoom ga nush, sister ais tut kuae ne pashare beyin lakin lae peeti hen wa, kono ja wae nikhaleenun aa, jab tak o puro khato hun ne thay lae muskil hen aroot bujok. Aas aki khato hun thay aroot pick degin. Tis bae bujok aki ne bin, lae mushkil hen waa aroot fit aki ne bae khato hun thokojo bagair...”

“Now people are not that naïve, sister they might not have shown you the well but it has a quite small opening, from where they usually take out the water, so without opening the whole lid, it is very difficult to fall into the well. She (The victim) must have opened the whole lid herself to jump into it. It is not possible that she went in by mistake, it is impossible she (the victim) would not even fit into the small opening without opening the whole lid herself...”

The neighbor further went on to say that the victim clearly got jealous of her sister. Becoming envious seeing her sister securing good grades in school and going to a better branch. The neighbor even proclaimed that the victim might as well feel discouraged and even insecure around her sister. The neighbor even told the victim’s mother to keep an eye on her in future too,

“lae aki nazuk surate haalor hen (___) ba, mas sum thae aki rayanos (___) ga. Ten agar na kueet geen, tou saa, na ten sinnet ga tou bujok been ne. Tou nisett jaik khacho bekae jo yar, ana asae zeemadari hen anisae khayal churok or mushot jaik ikhdaamek thok. Mas tou (___) rayanos khatare henik ga nile churre, kethae khin saa ano stageor aa khataar se ga akowar xaaz then.”

“She (victim) is in a very vulnerable situation, I openly told (name of the mother). If now she has gone to the well, she can even go to the river as well sister. So before anything serious happens to her, it is our responsibility to look after her and take measures accordingly. I even told her (name of the mother) to hid all the knives at home too, because sister at this stage she can even be attracted to a knife as well¹³.”

¹³ Here the respondent has used a very famous shina saying which roughly translates that a suicidal person will be attracted to any possible lethal means she/he sees around.

Of course her health problems cannot be cured or solved but one thing for sure we can do is, as the neighbor had said too, to look after her and be more careful towards the victim. She is definitely going through a lot more, with all the tiring procedures of medication and her own weak eyesight has handicapped her to function properly in this fast moving milieu. On top of that if she develops a sense of comparison it will get difficult each day to appreciate her sister's success and rather it will make her own position more vulnerable and fragile.

4.13. Case 13

This case has a very important significance among all the cases mention above. This particular victim had tried suicide twice within a year and few months period. Her second attempt was a success when she jumped directly into the river and her body was found after two days of search. Previously she had attempted by hanging herself from the ceiling fan but her sister-in-law saved her when she entered the room seeing her hanging from the roof. She was young 27 years old with apparently no mental or physical defects living her life.

But she sure was going through some physiological problems from the past few years. She was even taken to the hospital as well, where her doctors had diagnosed her with depression as I quote her father,

“wesse sath jaik billin k shuruor depression asil wesset, tou kare kare shikayat thesil rasil k heeyamutt bujamis thay, or heeyo ga sheelan thisil. Doctorokech ga harais ba wa ginni, dawaega dais, bus waqti aram daenesel.”

“What happened with her is, she had depression at first, at times she would complain about feeling like being suffocated, and she would also feel pain on her chest. We even took her to the doctors as well and gave her medicines, which would relieve her pain only for some time.”

She even left her schooling due to not feeling well, though she was not into studying either, so when she got better even than she did not continue her studies. Her family only tells depression to be the main cause of her attempt. The victim's father further goes on by saying,

“O daisae shak ga bus achanak aki bil ba har jaik, lail ne bil was jaik sochek thaik. Bae tou gottor ga ne asiles, ho thain khin hoh harais ba direct hospitalet or sum bae khin dubara atais.”

“That day too, it happened all of a sudden, we do not know what she was thinking. We were not home, so when we were called, we took her directly to the hospital and bought her back after recovery.”

It is very sad to realize that even after an attempt the family could not take care of her, when an attempt itself is an enormous hint that the person is going through some struggles and can be in a fragile situation. Upon questioning if they did not see another attempt coming their way, her father's response was,

“Bes tou fikr aki ne thais ne theek bilin thay ba. Tom goliye ga khasil ba hamesha aki or phattu ga sum bae aki asil ba.”

“We thought she had gotten fine so did not care that much. As she frequently took her medicines too and she acted all normal afterwards.”

Only after a little while it seems that her family ignored the attempt and as soon as they noticed the victim is getting back to her normal routine life, they completely forgot if she had some issues. Their reaction was normal with them, and according to her family, she too had forgotten about the event too, but little did they know. Her father was of the view that she had been always active in the household work even after the event and would even leave behind her sister and mother too. With her kind nature everyone in the house liked her too and was closed with them as well but apart from complaining about her health issues she has never opened up herself with anyone. After the suicide attempt when the family asked about it she did not say much as her father says.

“...was raek, ‘mat lail nush’ wesset lail aki ne bil was jaik thesil thaik. Depressionor asil ne tou wesset hoosh ne alin was jaik thesol tou. Sum aki asil ba, anu murr ass police SHO kech ga thaik ne k, ‘Mat lail ne bil mas jaik thais’. Muti wessekech jaik rayokett asil aki ne tou.”

“...she said, ‘I do not know’ and that she did not realize what she was doing. She was in depression so she did it unconsciously. She was all good. She even said the same to the police SHO¹⁴ when he investigated, she said, ‘I do not know what I had done’. And she had nothing else to say.”

Before the suicide she had even enrolled herself in a sewing center as well. But soon only after a few months into buying her own sewing machine, she left going to center saying she did not feel good. Though she was all good and normal.

“Ako marrokae xhak sum aki asil, tom chele dujaik ho ba tik ga thaik. Subah jo aki mashroof asil, sum bae aki asil ba. Jaik ga jaik gila ne thaik o desae xhak, na sishek shelan thok, na heeyo shelan thok ya muti jaik, esaab achanakek bilae. Adeek thok bemari hen ba, depression se anaa thareen. Ten heartae ga depressionae maslay lae bojo wanun, asae zanader adae jaik ne asil. Bus asae moutt asil ba ten jaik thonis kae.”

“She was all good when she suicided, she washed clothes that day and even cooked the food as well. She was busy from the morning, and she was all fine. She did not even complain about her chest pain or headaches or anything, it was just so sudden. This behaviors is an illness, depression does it. Now the problems of heart and depression is increasing day by day, our times had no ailments like this. It was her death, after all what could have we done.”

Her mother had similar viewpoint too, saying that they did not fear anything like that as she was all fine after that, all good. Never thinking she could reattempt, so they were relaxed too, her

¹⁴ Station House Officer. Since at her first attempt police was involved too, making it tiring process as the father had to go to the police station back and forth recalling it as the most tedious procedure.

mother continuously emphasizing how normally she would talk and go to fruit picking with them. Further expressing her frustration that,

“Kare chagag ga ne thaik ade jack thokae rae wan thay.”

“She has never even said that she felt doing anything like this.”

Her father further added that,

“Kare kare lae roxhet bujisil tou ho butinott aki rox bisil gottor. Ho mas a jul paal tha ramosos rox cam tharoket. Matt kon desil aas, mas jaik rayas tou manisil ho chup thay basil.”

“At times she would get really angry, so she would start showing anger on everyone at home. So I use to calm her down and try to compose her. She would listen to me and would agree to what I say to her and would than stay silent”

The victim’s relative, her second cousin, had similar view points about the deceased. The deceased apparently living a normal life, definitely had some issues. The relative openly admitted that the victim used to be made fun of whenever the cousins gathered around, only doing it for fun’s sake and because the victim was very simple in nature and naive too. The respondent explains that she might have had psychological issues. She would also fall into other’s traps very easily and would believe anyone and everyone that said anything to her. And that’s why she was even made fun of by others girls as they would falsely compliment her looks and style. She no doubt had a fun nature, briefs her relative, and would easily mingle well with others but she never shared how she felt and was very sensitive as well. The relative further continues to share an anecdote when the victim overheard some girls from her sewing center, talking behind her back as how the victim can be easily fooled and how she is a complete goof. Overhearing this, the victim is said to have left the room instantly and never came back to sewing classes after that.

Her death is a sad moment for all of us, and it is a big question mark on the overall mind set of the society. She already had committed suicide once, so how can the family and others around her take the situation so lightly? Were they already not given a hint by the victim? So should we expect a same careless behavior from the families of the attempt cases in this research and, though, almost all of them seem to have moved on with their lives, just as the deceased in this case, the lives are still at risk.

4.14. Main Findings

This research aims to study the factors of suicide and suicide attempts and in order to lessen the problem, factors must be identified beforehand and measure taken accordingly. If contributing factors are found than it will be easier to control the social problem. This research topic was chosen because it is a deep rooted problem in the social fabric of Gilgit-Baltistan. Problems without being seriously identified and treated ripe in to cause, which contribute in the ever increasing suicidal ratio in the region. This research study would provide information, and

organized data base on the key issue. It will highlight those vulnerable demographic, social and economic causes due to which people in Gahkuch find it difficult to cope with life and consequently choose death over life.

The research in this field is very inadequate about the factor behind this act, let alone the research on studying suicidal behavior and thoughts of the people in Gahkuch and the reaction or response of the society towards them. Of course the assessment of these were not an easy task, it is such a complex and sensitive issue that the literature related to this topic is already very scarce.

As we will move on, the deep rooted issues of the region will be highlighted, showing social intricacies of the area, practices and mindsets of the people, and their nature as well as social environment in which they dwell. Following sub topics will present a through yet precise findings this research had come across with to discover the factors behind this act.

4.14.1 No Education vs Educational Pressure

The region is backward and the public sector being very insufficient, people lack new sources of generating income. The extreme harsh climate conditions makes it difficult for farming as well. In this case, the inhabitants of Gahkuch only see opportunity in educating their children and attached many expectations with them as well, so when the children fail to cop up with the education system, the last option they choose, is to finish themselves. Considering the ever growing trend of educational attainment the youth seems to be stuck in this spiral of competing with each other. Every household in the region has one or two members from the family to have come to the cities for education and likewise they are also inducing the young generation to perform well and start building their future so that they get into good city universities. Being an isolated area with tough terrain, with all the new road networks and economics up-lifts, it is slowly evolving into a community much stronger than before in terms of exposure to rest of the world. With the increased construction of schools, both government and private, the pursuit of education has been a major goal of the community ever since. This of course is a good thing but it seems that it has its limitations and cons as well. Being thought as a catalysts of change, when the young generation is not able to follow up with the education requirements and when they are unable to perform well, this pressurizes their minds and with the equal pressure from the family the young generation seems to overburden themselves and end their lives in result. Hence, committing suicide seems for them to be the only way to end their fear of failure and facing their parents with bad grades. This particular had been a case with male gender of the society. In our culture like ours we tend to allocate specific roles to the different genders, like man had to be the bread earners whereas women need to look after the kids and household matters. This placement of roles is ingrained in them from the childhood so when they see themselves as not fulfilling those roles, it struck them specially boys when they see themselves failing at studies. And the fear of being a failed member of the society escalates and hence the fear of not providing for the family in future. While on the other hand, some of the cases in this research seem to have occurred due to no educational attainment as well. This was mainly the case with female suicide attempters where the family was either trying to get them married at an early age or were just

because the view that educating girl is not so important and hence seeing it as non-trivial. . And the thought that spending resources on educating female children is not a good investment as ultimately one day they will have to go to a new house and settle down with her husband's family. No matter how good they are in their studies, the due consideration is not given to them and so ultimately they develop a sense of inferiority. The difference between the mindset of the old generation and the new is such that both stand tall on their own verdict and none of the two parties seem to bring a common understanding between the two. The older generation sees a big achievement marrying their daughters whereas the daughters already seem to develop a sense of achieving success and individuality. It could be analyzed that the changes in society and the gap between traditional and modern values and attitudes affect the suicide attempts of women. Even if the women are promised continuation of studies even after the marriage, it seems that the early marriage itself takes a huge toll on the women's physical and mental health. Likewise early marriages being an important element in this regard too, has been discussed in more detail below.

4.14.2 Early Marriage

The rural life functioning is a lot different than the urban life dwellings. Starting from the family structures to very day mode of life, both appear to have different dimensions and approaches. Ours is a society where the elders are always right and younger ones does not have a say in the decision makings, even at times if it solely has to do with the young individuals themselves. This generation gap at times leads to many family conflicts and even a slightest resentment from the young ones is no acceptable in Ghizer's culture and can even tarnish the reputation of the new generation among the other family members. At age of sixteen girls are sent to their in-laws where they cannot cope up with the hardships and responsibilities of life, whereas they the girls actually are interested in studying and getting independent or just are trying to fulfill their own dreams. And when they see their dreams fading away, they commit suicide. If a teenager or the young generation tries to suggest something, he is considered as juvenile and immoral. It is because according to the society of rural dwellers, elders are always right as they have more experienced life hence have the ability to make better decisions for others as well. Whether they actually can make better decisions or not it is more about the traditional values and customary ethics. So one of the two parties, millennials and the old generation, have to make compromises and it seems that it is mostly the new generations that surrenders. The orthodox minds are resistant to change and enforce their rigid rules over their educated young generation, whereas in extreme cases when the youth does not yelled, the gap gets so complicated that it becomes almost impossible to resolve an issue without bringing any damage to one or the other. Girls become more victims of these ethical considerations whereas the boys find a way or two to get out of these moral restrictions. Though, the law may have given them the right to choose their own life partner and to divorce the husband who humiliates and exploits them, but they do not insist on using their rights rather they would kill themselves if they have been forced into a decision. This is because of stereotyping women as submissive, someone to stick to traditional standards and are crushed under the society's patriarchal pressure. Lack of Confidence and the

courage to fight prevents them from taking any step and even if they try to oppose, emotional blackmailing comes in the way and all of a sudden family honor is all what depends on the women's one decision. Women are considered as an honor and pride of her family and eventually they become a victim of this honor and pride. In this patriarchal system male has given all decision making authority where as women is considered as incomplete, insecure and ineffective without male but with time and exposure to the rest of the world the women of Gahkuch today are more into defending their Individualistic perspective and standing. Now they want to be independent, get equal education, equal rights and equal standing in the society and when they see a threat to any these rights, they start to feel caged and revolt against it. And when no option leaves behind they follow the path of ending one's life.

4.14.3 Parenting: To be Friendly or not to be Friendly

The gap between the new and old generation has bought many challenges with the passage of time and the inclusion of youth's more exposure to a new outlook seems to have widened the gap even more. We are parents, and we only think the best for our children is what almost all parents of the victims have thought so but this is not what the children's of the same parents consider. Generally it is agreed upon that the person with suicidal ideation has a sense that his/her relation with others is distant, lacking their support and hence experiencing a sense of isolation.

Despite the harmony and family integration in Gilgit-Baltistan's culture, family conflicts are associated with suicide risks among the common people. The old mindset and their ways of raising children seem to be too old to apply on this new generation, it is such a critical situation that out of fear of aggravating the situation, at times the parents leave everything on the child to make their own decision and totally back out from interfering. It is all because of how difficult the children get at times to control and difference in the mindset of the two makes the situations even worse. Throughout the whole research on the cases, the role of parents have been the significant one. One way or the other the parent's attitude towards the victim has been noteworthy. Despite the harmony, strong family integration and bondage in Gilgit-Baltistan's culture, the parents are facing their own difficult task of how to raise the millennial kids.

At one hand if the parents get too strict with the children, they oppose their decision and revolt. Here the parents dread agitating their children and rather than doing any good to them they fear to upset them even more. So from a strict behavior they move on to a more lenient one thinking the intruding and their pushy behavior might have been a good way to direct their children from the start. On the contrary, some parents have said to be too friendly which have stirred the bad behavior in their children and hence being too lenient with them came with a cost.

The victims on the other hand mostly portrayed how the parents have failed to understand them instead. Almost in every case of this research parent's role were substantial in the occurrence of the whole suicidal event, nearly half of them seemed to have been dissatisfied from their parent's response towards them. Even around the main event, in some cases the response of the parents towards the victims has been the final push factor to attempt suicide. And the attempter

themselves openly have portrayed how their parent's certain reaction made them very disturbed, and hence the attempt, as they could not tolerate their unexpected negative response. Here the parents need to be a bit flexible and the importance of studying the prevailing situation is equally significant. A key goal here would be to involve children's perceptions and viewpoints in their considerations as well as getting much involved in their lives too. As most of the victims have said to be distant from their parents and whenever a problem prevailed in their lives they could not tell them openly and rather they feared to get scolded from them and out of the fear they committed suicide. The focus of such efforts from the parent's side determines the child's worldly success as well as, they see their parents to be the backup in case they need support in any matter. From the cases, it seems that the victims are extremely sensitive of refusal and families' giving up on them, likewise the young generation of Gahkuch seemed to be rather dissatisfied from how their parents treat them and the way their relationship works between them.

4.14.4 Depression and Anger

This is again very much related to how the parents raise their children. As the teacher in case 2 has said that, here in Gahkuch or Gilgit-Baltistan in general, the parents raise their kids in such a way that they free their children at early ages and as they grow up and face the real world it gets difficult for them to survive. So when they see the environments not working in their favor they get frustrated and depressed. Which is one of the reason for this inhumane act towards themselves. Also as we have seen that in some cases the reasons were merely some cold or harsh words from their parents which they could not tolerate and ended up harming themselves. Mostly, the victims have also referred to how their parent's attitude have changed towards them, and how this changed attitude have made them angry and depressive. Similarly, an important point to note here would be that most of the victims throughout their interview have mentioned that they were so angry at the situation that they did not realize what they were about to do. And only when they came to their senses after the attempt they had comprehended what actually they had done. Mostly they had said, "I did not realize what I was doing I was so angry" or "I do not know what I was thinking". Being from Gahkuch myself our people tend to be very emotional and bad-tempered. The youth specially need to realize as how to control that temper, everyone get a scold from their parent's ones in a while but to decide to end one's life is not normal. Here in almost all the cases with suicide attempts, the attempters state of mind was as such to have experienced oneself as out of control and seemingly was not in a capacity to rationally think or function. And the suicidal attempts were more seemed to be overwhelmed by angry impulses, hence we can see a link between aggression and suicide in few of the cases like case 8, 10 and 11.

Everyone feels down from time to time, which can result due to some reasons but at times the feeling of low mood, unhappiness or sadness comes for no apparent reason as well. It was really interesting how the mother of victim in case 12 explained how depression works, who herself told to be struggling from depression and declared it to be the cause of high suicide trends in

Gahkuch as well. According to her, even with all the house hold work and being so busy throughout the day, depression never leaves her alone and her mind is constantly struggling with depressive thoughts. Also it seems that even the young ones are at the verge of depression, even the respondents from the cases of 1 and 13 declared to have struggling from depression and been taking their prescriptions.

4.14.5 Insecurity and a Sense of Comparison

It is very alluring and yet menacing emotionally to compare oneself to others but it is mostly what we do consciously or even unconsciously at times throughout our lives. In reference to the theory of social comparison, we do it in order to evaluate ourselves and a judgement accordingly. No doubt comparing oneself to another person can give you motivation to grow and flourish but it can also spin the wheel towards self-doubt. A very famous saying goes by “comparison is the death of joy” and today even science has agreed to it. Contrasting oneself with another person not only develop the feelings of envy, it also lowers one’s self confidence and the person can even go into depressive mode. Hence coming with a cost in itself. So when one devalues their self, starts a downward comparison, that person is actually getting into a dangerous mode, similarly this seems to be the case with few victims in this research too. One ended the light of their life while the other miraculously survived a suicide attempt (case 6, 12 respectively).

Not only specifically these two cases but there seems to be a tendency to comparison even in other cases. Like comparing how much a friend have studied and how little is her/his educational attainment and likewise among the siblings. If this comparison is how we start to evaluate our self, there will never come a point when we are better than others and we will forever be trapped in the spiral. These negative events can greatly have adverse effects on the way one feel about themselves as well as their temperament in general and hence the resultant lower self-esteem.

Likewise the parents seem to be doing the same to their children, quoting how other’s children are doing and achieving milestones. This of course pressurize the children, over burdening them with more responsibilities and increasing stress factors that youth already go through.

Similarly, it is a human nature to feel insecure about something in their personality traits or physical attributes. Some are self-doubting their relationships, persona and self-worth while others are skeptical about their physical abilities and capabilities. But taking them to such an extent as to end one’s life have never been considered normal, it may be considered as a problem which the youth normally faces but according to this research it can also prevail in older generation as well, like the victim of case of 6. If normal people can experience insecurities in their lives about themselves let alone someone who is differently-abled, that is the case 12 in this research. Who not only envied her friends but her own sister as well, who was progressing well in her studies and above all had no disabilities like that of her own.

4.14.6 Suicidal Behavior and Thoughts

As many researches in my literature review have shown how vulnerable are the lives of those who have attempted suicide. Vulnerable in term of future health expenditures, facing social

problem when reaching into midlife and even in extreme cases another attempt or ultimately committing suicide. Major

Fortuitously, it seems that all the victims of the attempt cases in this research have moved on with their lives. They have shown zero or no inclination at all to go on the same path again, it may be a bit utopian situation but it is in fact what can be deduced from their interviews and studying their views, behavior and current state. The reason for their changed behavior and almost zero tendency towards suicide ideation can be majorly held responsible for the fact that their life had been momentarily transformed in one way or the other. Like the two victims of cases 7 and 11, are now married and have had a positive reinforcement in their lives in the form of children. They said to have never thought about suicide or that event in particular, since they were blessed with children, as now they “do not even have the time to think about it”. While the rest of the attempters have seemed to have experience the expression “once bitten, twice shy”.

As zilboorg (1936) suggests that suicidal persons, especially those who have been medically serious cases, feel a sense of tranquility and being calm shortly after they have attempted suicide. As the reason being that the previous extreme emotional phase have been displayed and communicated. Likewise the cases 8 and 10 have also displayed a same emotional state. It all started with anger and frustration and attempting suicide with the most lethal means one can possibly think of in Gahkuch, e.g gunshot and high dose pills. Now their behaviors portrays the calmness of the sea after a storm, as if nothing went ever wrong and suddenly everything gets settled down. With the adamant view on realizing the mistake they had committed, they have said to come a long way and learnt their lessons, apart from this self-realization what’s more important here is that now they both are very busy with their lives. One is doing jobs and also is working voluntarily while the other victim is now running his own mobile shop (case 10 and 8 respectively). It is very much evident from the cases under study that keeping oneself busy diverts the negative thoughts that one might experience otherwise.

Feeling hopeful towards the future prospects is also an added element in near-to-zero suicide ideation, or even realizing the mistake can take U-turns too. Like the case 9, where she is quite hopeful that things are going to change for her, as the victims now realizes her importance to her brothers where they have in return assured her that they are with her through thick and thin. Here the victim may not have been so positive about her parents but for sure she has now great trust on her brothers. As they have also promised giving her good education and the assurance that thing will change good for once and all as if that was all what she wanted to hear before the event or actually harming herself. Likewise the victim from case 10 also now have a positive outlook at the future and apart from that the changed behavior is also due to the feeling of guilt as well and the realization that it was not a rational decision to end life once and forever.

It is definitely a positive sign that the attempters studied for this case did not really seem to be on the track of suicide any more, but it is shocking to study that how in the suicide cases the deceased even after giving hints of killing oneself were ignored and not taken care of. The hints

were as clear as ‘I am going to kill myself anyway’ or even randomly asking friends for gun etc. (case 1) and more something like ‘I better kill myself or I will eat poison or I will jump into the river’ (case 3). While, some of the other deceased, interestingly, had rather been showing an adverse reaction to such acts performed by others and their reaction towards committing suicide were like ‘Where do they find all the courage to do such an act’, ‘People who kill themselves are shameless’ and even ‘...both had wasted themselves...’ (Case 4 and 2 respectively). Here in these cases the victims might not be idealizing suicide before committing, but it looks that they have been going through a really rough phase. Not one reason but multiple factors were piling up on them and altogether crushing them with the unbearable weight, thereby their failures to cope led to the brutal outcomes.

It is also essential to consider that the suicide attempts were driven by a sudden burst of strong emotions and taking rational decisions were far from near. Thus, people who are emotionally fragile reacted to those unexpected glitches or harder times that way finding it difficult to cope with the prevailing situations.

4.14.7 Response and Behavior of the Society

It is very important to understand society’s view on the act of suicide or any other related behavior. More importantly the thinking needs to be shaped in such a way that rather than taking it as a sinful act it should also be acknowledged as something beyond that, it can be a mental health problem in some cases or plain lack of skills to cope up with the prevailing situation.

Starting off with studying the behavior of the society, especially the family, towards the deceased person, it seems that almost in all the cases the role of parents were a significant one. The parents of the deceased openly admitting that the relationship between them was not a friendly but rather a distant one. Take the example of case 1 where the parents even after realizing that the deceased is suffering from some emotional breakdowns, leave everything on himself, in fear of making the situation even worse. But it would have saved the life if the parents had showed rather a caring and concerned attitude towards the victim, may be by asking how he feels or what his feelings are. And above all what really is dangerous is the notion that the parents of Gahkuch seemed to be very detached from their kids and apart from the normal family talk they do not seem to share much of their thoughts, likes and dislikes and most importantly how they feel.

The deceased obviously seemed to know the unfriendly behavior with the parents and rather they had shared their problems and feelings with friends or roommates etc. With the help of these respondents, it was easier to dig out more information about their relationships with the parents, and they seemed comfortable to share more with friends rather than with parents. As we can see the deceased had even shared how they think their parents feel towards them and how they in return had felt about the parent’s behavior. As one of the respondents, a friend from case 1 has shared that the deceased thought his death would only cause a temporary sadness and soon his family would be back to living a normal life. Being at such a young age, a little support would have gone a long way for the deceased and it is saddening to know that they do not openly tell

their own parents how they feel and what they are going through. Instead the victims have felt a changed behavior of their parents. Likewise in case 2 as well if the deceased had a friendly and open relationship with his parents he would not have been dead and committed suicide out of their fear rather had asked for their help and support. Likewise if we move onto case 3 and 9 it is evident that the victims were not that open because of the health conditions of their parents, hence feared sharing any of their problems with them thinking it might further deteriorate their health issues. While on the other hand the parents openly admitted themselves as well that their kids would not share things with them but they cared for them and provide them the necessities of life, with the resources they had at their disposal.

There may, nevertheless, exist some variations across the families but with any good relation with the victim might have saved the life as then they would more likely to have expressed their painful feelings, receiving a compassionate response. But that never seemed to happen with any of the victims in this research, as they could not respond positively the victims suicidality accelerated. In general, seeing all the cases we can say that, family members provided more material care rather than responding to their emotional and psychological health issues.

Now coming on to the second half of the topic which is to see how the victims of the suicide attempts have felt about the reactions from the people who surround them and their response towards the victims. Although attitudes towards the suicide attempters vary greatly, it is extensively prevalent that people are not considered highly, in fact they might even face bullying or ruthless comments from the society. The situation is further convoluted and problematized by stigmatizing suicide in rural society like Gahkuch.

In almost all the suicide attempt cases the victims had limited themselves to their houses and preferred going out less. Plus, the society's response towards the victims also depended on how much the event was publicized or how many knew about it. For example in the case 1, the attempter was relieved that not many knew about the event as rather it was just the family who were aware of the unfortunate happening. But the attempter here further insisted that what other's thought might never have affected her as much as she was concerned with what her parents have been thinking. Though they were more careful towards her but somehow the parents convinced her to marry even when she did not wanted to. The same goes for the victim in case 8, where he did not had to face any troubles or bad remarks from the society but his parents grew more closer to him after that and had been showing more affection.

It seems that female suicide attempters had to face some troubles facing the society as compared to the male attempters. Like the victim in case 9 says she grew more conscious of what others might have thought about her and the reason why she had attempted suicide. She further explains how much she wants to go outside and live normally again but fears the comments she might get from the society, as she had also said, "our people talk bad". Similarly, the female victim from case 10 faced similar circumstance and bounded herself to the home for a year. She seemed also very distress about what stories people might have been making at her back. But she

faced a positive reinforcement from her parents and siblings which kept her optimistic about the future and kept her going forward.

Chapter 5

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

After going through the different cases and studying them deeply through interviews and direct observation of the environment few factors are identified in Gahkuch which are becoming the reasons for the increasingly high rates in suicides and suicide attempts. Though, as we have seen in the cases as well that there are no single but multiple factors leading to that brutal act, which means that the solution needs to be multi-dimensional too.

Of course the deceased victims are gone now but what we are left with are the ones at the most vulnerable position, though according to this specific research there is not much to be worried about when it comes to the attempters. As it seems that they have moved on, one very important lesson or conclusion we can make from this piece of work is that firstly, the more the victims involve her/himself in their day to day lives it is going to be a positive step towards living a normal life. Which further means that the suicide ideation can be given a back seat, as most of the victims from the cases of suicide attempts have made their lives more motivating by indulging themselves in busy schedules one way or the other. Mostly by marrying or starting a business like cases 7, 8 and 11. Likewise the attempter's minds can be diverted into constructive and beneficial acts and thoughts by even only giving them hope and support, as can be seen from the cases 9 and 10 that how their outlook at life has influenced by the mere support from the family, openly admitting how important their family's caring reactions have been in overcoming or never thinking about suicide again.

It is shame though, that the victims had to face the negative reaction from the outside world, now here the gender of the victim played an important role. Gahkuch being a conservative society, like any rural area, even with all the development and high literacy rate, it still has a long way to go. Female roles still seemed to be defined by the society rather than the females themselves and likewise their worthy actions are more marginalized and less acknowledged but their mistakes and faults are more glamourized and targeted. Same seems to be the case with attempting suicides, the male attempters very casually talked about how they were never bothered by the society for performing a suicide attempt, beside the casual expected reaction of the family. Whereas the female attempters had to face them as an additional trauma besides the emotional upheavals from the event for as long as a year, confining themselves to the activities within the boundaries of their house. Always fearing to hear the stories made up by other people out of gossip and victimization. Of course this had a negative effect on the female attempters, diminishing their confidence and increasing their insecurity. This aspect in return took more years for them to overcome and for starting a normal life gain.

Society needs to be more careful towards the suicide attempters of course. As before we have termed it as a societal disease so it needs to be solved by a collective solution and always looking out for struggling people with a watchful eyes. But it is really a fault on our part that even after some clear hints from the deceased and struggling people we could not figure out the underlying

depressive warning signs. Be it the friends of the deceased or even their own family, it gives a picture that their struggles were rather taken non-seriously, paying no heed at all. But as soon as we realize it is already too little, too late. A great example of this would be the 1st and 2nd case how we can totally ignore some deadly and serious confrontations with a person on such grim topics.

Apart from that many lives were also lost due to our negligence of not recognizing the changed behavior of the deceased person around the time of the main event. Mostly when a suicidal person plans on to taking one's own life they also start to act differently or weirdly and their behavior takes a shift. Like due to extreme tensed situation or due to struggle the health takes on the impact and starts to deteriorate. This have had happened with the deceased of case 3 and her mother herself had witnessed her condition and narrated that she had gotten bad physical appearance wise, turning pale and getting weaker. The same behavior had been observed by the family of case 4, where apart from getting physically weak, the deceased had also talked about how she does not like doing anything as if she is "dead from inside". The mother of the deceased also mentioned that she did not even comb her hair for days. Even with all the apparent changes in the behavior the gravity of the situation could not be realized. Either it is a conscious negligence or there is a dire need to educate the people about offering care and support or at least a greater understanding of a person's need who seem to be displaying hopelessness, isolation, or plain threatening to kill her/himself. Nevertheless the relationship and communication difficulties between the parents and children of Gahkuch did not seem to be at a good locus either. As the respondent from the case 2, the deceased's hostel warden had also said established that there exists a gap between the parents and students and further asserts that very few parents from Gahkuch come to visit and enquire the whereabouts of their children. So in this way parents can be fully aware of their children's activities and can get a close connection with them. Having knowledge of these areas can really contribute a positive enlightening, plus can be helpful in preventing and treating any prevailing situation.

Of course intervention is not always easy when dealing with as delicate as cases related to suicidal behavior. Being such a serious and increasing public health problem, still little is known as how to handle such situations and most importantly the best kind of intervention appropriate for the youngsters. But as far as this particular case of Gahkuch is concerned, it is very important to realize that parents need to be more active and supportive towards their children. It is vital to grasp that time has changed and now there are more things the child has to struggle from or is simply facing in their day to day lives. So if even the parents, which could be the only support system, get distant hence further limiting them to show their true emotions, this might cause them into a self-reliant regime. Such tendencies can further instigate relational difficulties moving slowly towards a more suicidal behavior.

It is all neither the fault of the parents, but nonetheless, they must realize that things are moving at a different pace now. For example, now compared to as before, a daughter might not be willing to get married at an age of 17 or 18, like the victims in case 5 and 7. Rather they would

prefer to get education, stand on their own feet and may be than they will think about getting married. It is an old mindset that as soon as the daughters get to a certain age they should be given away in marriage, as it lessens their responsibility and lifts the so called burden from their shoulders. This clash of mindsets breeds more problems and when arguments take place between the two opposite parties so does the fatal outcomes, like in the mentioned cases.

This further over burdens and over pressurizes the youth, making them feel like agitated and alienated. Our older generation no doubt have seen tougher times and had been through real struggles, keeping that in view they expect a lot more from the new generation. But not everyone is a born super star, some are simply not capable and might lack behind in the race of competing with each other. For example some even find it hard to cope with their school studies, e.g. case 1 and 2, so when they assess their position and compare it to their parent's expectations, they do not get happy with the outcome. The competition and the pressure from family and society is such that even a slight failures bring a great set back, leaving them in a traumatized position and paralyzed state and eventually forcing them to end their lives. If a normal person goes through such troubles let alone what might be happening to differently-abled people. The same can be related to the differently-abled victim from case 12, being a different scenario it can get really difficult for the mother to take care of her and likewise the deceased from case 6. It is important to spread awareness that being differently-abled does not make someone a lesser person. But Gahkuch is getting so competitive that the society's pressure might as well have instilled the thought of competing and being perfect.

In an already competitive environment, the pressure from society gets doubled for the special ones. With insecurities and comparing one's self to another, they further divulge themselves into deeper zones of stress. Take the example of the victim from case 12, who constantly compares herself with her own sister and is in constant struggle to prove herself in front of the society. Which, in return, had actually made her believe that without education no one can survive nowadays as "there is no life of those who do not study". And in another response referring herself as a "dead body" and nothing else. Of course these thoughts are instilled by the society, stressing out not only the special ones but also pressuring the parent.

In this case or in most cases developing a strong support from family and friends can be a good strategy to prevent oneself from falling into the spiral of Self-loathing, also there must be measures to enhance the coping strategies against any stressful events throughout the life.

Depression, stress and anger were the most commonly used words I have heard throughout interviewing the respondents, victims and even when talked to some members of the society about the higher rates of suicide in Gahkuch. Again, as a researcher I cannot emphasis enough how important the role of parents can be in reducing any future prospect of losing a life. A very important case, if I may consider, in this research has to be case 13, a case where suicide attempt was made before committing a suicide. The victim is said to have been struggling through depression, according to his father and within a year she had attempted again and this time it was

a success for her. It is saddening to become aware that the severity of mental health problems is not known even to the family members of those who are struggling from it. As the father of the deceased from case 13 talks about it, it felt like it was rather a flu for which the victim was even taking the pills. Had it been only the pills which could save lives, things would have been much easier to control, I am no doctor but as far as I have known depression needs to be treated psychologically as well as emotionally too, at least. Leaving everything on pills does not seem to have made the situation any better. As mentioned before as well, keeping oneself busy have had a positive impact on some of the suicide attempters, widely admitting how changed they have become now undergoing almost zero suicidal thoughts. Things would have turned reasonably better for the deceased if the family had known the severity of dealing with a depressive person, but being uneducated and illiterate they cannot be held much responsible. But this case definitely shows the lack of proper awareness and basic knowledge of mental health problem.

Acronym

AKDN: Aga Khan Development Network

AKRSP: Aga Khan Rural Supports Programme

EU: European Union

FIR: First Information Report

G-B: Gilgit-Baltistan

KP: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

SHO: Station House Officer

WHO: World Health Organization

Glossary

Ghizer: A District in Gilgit-Baltistan

Hudah: It is a prescription from peers and is given by them to the patients to eat according to their directions. Due to her constant complains the victim was also taken to peers as well, who are said to have powers to recover a person from any mental or even physical ailments and the local people have strong believe that it can bring good as well.

Kuee: It is a type of well but much narrower as it gets down and down. Being very common in the north every household individually owns one or two. It is basically built inside a huge room which is used for storing purposes by the villagers.

Shanti: Different rare bird feathers are placed together and attached to the white traditional cap worn specially by the groom on the wedding day. A beautiful symbol of culture often worn at big events or celebrations by the people of Gilgit.

Shina: A language spoken in Ghizer, Gilgit, Diamer, parts of Hunza and few districts in KP

Manae: It is an event of harvesting. Where the locals gather and turn by turn help each other with separating the grain from the harvest with tools and machinery.

Wakhan: A place in the extreme north-west of Gigit-Baltistan

Annexure-1

Interview Schedule

The research questions for this study was designed considering the ever increasing trends of suicide rates in Gilgit-Baltistan. Based on the objectives of the research an interview schedule was designed to fully equip the researcher's mandate without any loopholes with systematic outlook. This was also developed to stay focused throughout the interview without indulging in unnecessary details and yet precisely representing the objectives without being haphazard.

The response from each respondent was carefully incorporated but it is also important to note here that these may not exactly reflect the type of questions asked. The actual interview's outlook and scenario greatly alters the type of questions asked.

Questions for Suicide Attempters

- How was your relationship with family and friends? (Prior to the event)
- How did your parents treat you or how's their treatment towards you?
 - Do you often get scolded by them?
- Did you try to tell others that you're going through a rough time?
 - Did you try to give them a hint?
- Do you have any serious health problem?
 - Did you go to any Doctor?
- Tell me a little about the suicide attempt?
 - What did you do?
 - What method did you use?
 - Time and place of attempt?
- What condition made you do it?
 - What were the other issues you think you were facing or dealing with?
- Did you really wanted to take your own life?
 - Or if there was other motive behind it?
- What were your thought right before the event?
 - Weren't you afraid?
- Did you know anyone who attempted suicide?
 - What was your reaction to it?
- Did someone find you or did you contact someone?

- Who among your family and friends knew about the attempt?
 - How did they respond?

- What are your expectations from your family?
- Do you feel comfortable talking to people about it?
- Any kind of threat that you might felt from people?
- Did people treat you differently or the same?
- Did anything happen which was particularly unhelpful?
- Who or what was most helpful to you in the time just after the attempt?
- How are things with your family and friends now?
- Are they more concerned about you after the event?
 - Do they tell that they are still worried about you?
 - Do they show concern towards you now?

- What did you anticipated would happen after the event?
 - Did you anticipate the response of other after the event?
- How serious were you? Any severe injuries?
 - Were you afraid of them?
 - Did you feel relief or regret at being alive?
- How did you feel about yourself just after the attempt?
- Did you feel right about the action?
 - Did anyone else try to tell what you did?
- How often do you think about that event?
 - Do you think about that event as a major one in your life or are there other major events as well?
- Did you feel any changes after the attempt?
 - Or tried to change anything about you?
 - Are you a different person or the same?
- Were there any similar incidences where you might have involved yourself?
- What do you think are the reasons behind this ever increasing trend of suicide in this area?
- How are things for you at present?
 - Where do you see yourself today?

Questions for the Family

- What was his/her qualification?
- Was he/she married?
- How was her/his nature?
 - Did he/she use to talk a lot?
 - Was she/he shy and reserve?
 - Did she/he use to get angry soon?
 - Did you had any idea she/he could do such a thing?
- How was her/his relationship with family members?
 - With whom he/she was very close in a family?
 - What were your expectations from him/her?

- How was his/her relationship with close relatives?
- Were there any restrictions on her?
- What kind of interest he/she has?
- Did you ever ask him/her about his/her interests?
- Does she had any health related problems?
- Tell me about the main event?
 - What was her/his age at the time of attempt?
 - Did anything like this happened before as well?
 - How did he/she commit suicide?
 - When were you when you heard this tragic news?
 - Why do you think she/he kill herself/himself?
 - Who do you think is responsible for it?
 - What was the time and place of suicide?
 - Any one nearby the scene at that time?
 - Do you think she/he commit suicide to prove something?
 - Now do you think what might have saved her/him?
- How was her/his behavior prior the event?
 - Did her/his behavior change?
 - Did she/he try to tell you something?
 - How was she that day?
 - What did she do or how normal was she?
 - Did she/he had complaint about something?
- How was her/his reaction to suicide?
 - Did she/he ever expressed her views on suicide?
 - How would she/he react to such news?
 - She/he ever talked about death before?
 - Did she ever expressed how she felt?
- Any serious illness in a family?
- How often you hear news related to suicide in your area?
- How do you feel when you hear of some one killing himself/herself in surrounding?
- What do you think are the reasons behind this ever increasing trend of suicide in this area?
- Do you think suicide can be controlled?
- Did you know any one who attempted suicide recently?

Questions for the Neighbours, Friends and Teachers

- How well did you know him/her?
 - How do you know her?
 - How was her/his nature?
 - Did she/he ever tried anything like this before?
 - Did she/he tried to tell you anything about committing suicide?
- How was his/her relationship with you?
 - Did she/he tried to share anything with you?

- Was she/he friendly with you?
- Did she/he use to get depressed?
- Do you remember his/her last conversation with you before suicide?
 - Did her/his behavior changed prior the event?
 - Were there any changes in her/his behaviour?
 - Did she/he give you a hint or something?
 - Did she/he seemed depressed?
- How was she/he with her/his family?
 - Are they friendly?
 - How was her/his relationship with others?
 - Did she/he had any family problems that you know of?
 - How is their parent's behavior towards her/him?
- How did you learn about the sad incident?
 - How did he/she commit suicide?
 - What do you think were the reasons behind his/her suicide?
 - Who do you think is responsible for it?
 - Do you think she/he commit suicide to prove something?
 - Did you expect such an act from her/him?
- What do you think why people commit suicide?
- Who is to blame when someone commmits suicide?
- How often you hear news related to suicide in your area?
 - Why has the suicide rate been increasing in the past few years?
 - How do you think suicide can be controlled?
 - Did you know any one who attempted suicide recently?

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