

Relationship Between Delusional Disorder and Suicidal Ideation of Public Senior Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State

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Abstract

The study investigated relationship between delusional disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State. Two research questions, two objectives and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Adopted correlation research design. The population of the study comprised of 21,875 SS2 students in 23 Public Secondary School Students of Nasarawa State. A total of 1,340 SS2 students were selected using cluster sampling technique. A questionnaire tagged delusional disorder and suicidal ideation questionnaire (DEDASIQ) was developed for the purpose of data collection. The questionnaire was subjected to validation by experts and the outcome yielded an index of 0.88. The instrument was further subjected to pilot study in order to ascertain its reliability. Cronbach alpha method was then used to compute the score obtained from the pilot study thereby yielding a reliability index of 0.80. Data was collected, transformed and analyzed using person's product moment correlation. The findings of the study reveal that there is a significant relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State and there is a significant relationship between erotomantic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State. The study recommended that management of schools in collaboration with parents should subject learners with somatic cases to clinical treatment as well rigorous sessions counseling therapy so that thoughts of attempting to commit suicide can be eliminated from their minds. It further that recommended guidance and counseling services should be revived in schools and professional school counselors be recruited for the purpose of addressing cases erotomantic disorder. This will help in reducing cases of suicide.

Keywords: *Delusional disorder, Suicidal ideation, Public school, Students.*

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Introduction

Globally, suicidal behaviour is seen as a growing public health problem. It has become one of the major causes of high mortality rate in the present world population. It is said to be the act of intentionally causing one's own death (WHO, 2019). Research has also proven that, suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among adolescents and young persons aged 15-19 years (WHO, 2022), and that more than 800,000 people die annually through suicide worldwide. It has also been evidence that suicide varies from one country to another and is partly related to the availability of effective means such as, hanging, poisoning by the use of pesticides, firearms, etc. In India, young children of 18 years' committee suicide due to failure in examination, while others are due to family problems (Klonsky et al., 2016).

Suicide behaviours include Suicidal Ideation; that is, wanting to die by suicide, Suicide Planning; which is preparing to die by suicide, and Suicide Attempts; which is also making attempts to die by suicide (Ugwuoke, 2016). Statistics show that one person commits suicide every 40 seconds and reports vary by country and location (Brown, 2014).

The rising wave of suicidal ideation is a source of worry to many people. Although little is known about suicide ideation among secondary school students. Suicidal thought negatively can affect the quality of life, physical and mental well-being of students. This is because our society of today and adolescents' dynamism and peculiarity in schools are becoming a challenge. Now these challenges among young adolescents could be due to academic obligations (stress), social stress, socio-economic status of parents etc, which most times may seem to overwhelm them, and if they do not have coping skills and the ability to handle enormous challenges, they might therefore succumb to their conscious and start thinking of risky behaviours that might lead them into having thoughts of committing suicide and even make attempts towards suicidal action.

Adolescents' involvement in thought about suicide is calamitous since a lot of time and energy are lost in so doing, and this could be as a result of the significant changes they go through; the new learning abilities they try to acquire and the difficulties they encounter that leads them into suicide (Knight, 2019).

One main suicidal behaviour is suicidal ideation. Suicidal ideation is the thought process of having ideas, or ruminations about the possibility of ending one's own life. World Health Organization (2022) says Suicide ideation is not a diagnosis, but is a symptom of mental disorder and can occur in response to adverse life events without the presence of mental disorder. Suicidal ideation is associated with depression and other mood disorders, however many other mental disorders, life events and family events can increase the risk of suicidal ideation (Klonsky et al., 2016).

Suicidal ideation means persistent thought of killing oneself. Brown (2014) viewed suicidal ideation as any self-reported thoughts of engaging in suicide related behaviour. Ugwuoke (2016) defined suicidal ideation as an individual's obsession with the idea of killing him or herself. Some researchers suggested that suicide thoughts should not be ignored. This is because Gvion and Apter (2013) were of the view that suicide, which is the final act of suicidal behaviours, starts with ideation. Most people with suicidal ideation do not go on to make suicide attempts but suicidal thoughts are considered a risk factor. Suicidal ideation is a mental disorder condition that must be controlled and handled with caution because it may sometimes arise due to delusional disorder.

Delusional disorder is a mental condition in which a person and or a learner cannot tell what is real from what is imagined. It was previously called "paranoid disorder" which is a type of serious mental illness called psychotic disorder. It is an unshakable belief in something that is not true. It is the belief in something that is not part of the person's culture or subculture and almost everyone knows this belief to be false. People with delusional disorder often continue to socialize and function normally, and they generally do not behave in an obviously odd or bizarre manner. People with delusional disorder often experience non-bizarre delusions. Non-bizarre delusions involve situations that could possibly occur in real life, such as being followed, deceived or loved from a distance these delusions usually involve mis-interpretation of perceptions or experiences. In reality, these situations are either untrue or are highly exaggerated. Delusional disorder persons, in some cases might become so preoccupied with their delusions that their lives are disrupted. Delusional disorder can be classified into somatic and erotomatic disorder.

Somatic disorder is a mental and behavioural characterized by recurring, multiple and current clinically significant complaints about somatic symptoms. Somatic disorder is diagnosed when a person has a significant focus on physical symptoms such as pain, weakness or shortness of breathe, to a level that results in major distress and problems functioning. People with somatic disorder have excessive thoughts, feelings and behaviours relating to the physical symptoms. The physical symptoms may or may be associated with diagnosed medical condition, but the person is experiencing symptoms and believes they are sick, for instance, someone who believes there are parasites living inside their body may be suffering from somatic delusions.

Erotomatic disorder on the other hand is an uncommon paranoid condition that is characterized by an individual's delusions of another person being infatuated with them. Erotomatic is a condition that is sudden, and also chronic. Erotomatic disorder is sometimes called De Clerambault's syndrome after a French psychiatrist who first described it as a distinct disorder in 1921. The condition is common among females who are shy, dependent, sexually inexperienced (Seeman, 2016). Delusional disorder is a syndrome which

should be adequately addressed not only in adults but specifically in learners so that thoughts of suicide can be eliminated.

There exist in the literature a number of studies on suicidal ideation. Erdinc and Vedat (2023) conducted a study on somatic disorder as a predictor of suicidal ideation in Istanbul, Turkey. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the correlation between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation. Correlation research design was adopted for the study. The study concluded that there is an association between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation, Istanbul, Turkey. Similarly, Snowdown (2017) investigated delusional disorder and risk of suicide in Sydney, Australia. Results indicate there was a significant effect of delusional disorders such as somatic and erotomatic on the risk of suicide in Sydney, Australia.

Moreover, since the aim of learning is to enhance a permanent change in behavior, it is important for the school system and health practitioners to collaborate to reduce such cases among students. The study is therefore geared towards examining the relationship between delusional disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state.

Research Questions

1. Is there any relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state?
2. Is there any relationship between erotomatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study and were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state.
2. There is no significant relationship between erotomatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Max Coltheart's two factor theory of delusion. According to Max Coltheart, a satisfactory theory of delusion should be able to answer two questions about the genesis and maintenance

of delusional beliefs. The questions include: (i) where does the delusion come from? (ii) why is the delusion adopted and then maintained in the face of disconfirming evidence? Two models of delusions provide and answer to these questions by advocating two factors in the generation and maintenance of delusion belief. Factor 1 answers the question and results in anomalous data/ experience consider the capgras delusion where a person comes to believe that a loved one has been replaced by an identical impostor. Factor 2 is a cognitive process described as either dysfunctional or biased. Explaining either the initial endorsement of the delusional belief or the prolonged maintenance of the delusional belief in the face of mounting pressure (Eugelna,2024).

Research Method

Correlation research design was used in this study. Correlation Survey research is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from a few people considered to be a representative sample of the entire population (Emaikwu, 2012). The study is correlation survey research because the required data were collected at a particular time, from a large sample, for the purpose of describing the population represented by the sample at that particular time. Correlation research design was used in this study because the study seeks to determine the relationship between delusional disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa state. The population of the study comprises 21,875 SS2 students in 234 public senior secondary school students of Nasarawa State. Sample size of 1403 SS2 students were selected for the study through cluster sampling. A questionnaire tagged Delusional-Disorder and Suicidal Ideation Questionnaire (DEDASIQ) was developed for the purpose of data collection.

To ensure validity of the questionnaire used, it was given to two experts in measurement and evaluation for face and content validity. The experts subjected it to critical appraisal. The Scores from the appraisal of experts were used to obtain consensus logical validity indices of 0.88.

The questionnaire was subjected to pilot testing in order to ascertain its reliability. Some of the respondents were part of the population but not part of the sample for this study were allowed to respond to items on the questionnaire. The data obtained from the pilot test was used to compute the internal consistencies of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha reliability method. The analyses of the responses yielded reliability indices of 0.80. According to Anikweze (2014), any instruments with the reliability index of above 0.70 is reliable enough to be used for measuring any variable in any research. The researcher therefore considered

the reliability indices as suitable and good enough for the study. Pearson product moment was used to analyze the descriptive and Inferential data at the significance level at 0.05.

Results and Discussion

In order to answer the research questions, the calculated r-values (correlation values) of Pearson Product moment correlation. between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between Somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state?

Table 1 Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing the Strength of Relationship Between Somatic Disorder and Suicidal Ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State

Variables	N	r	Remarks
Somatic Disorder	1340	0.72	Positively High Relationship
Suicidal Ideation	1340		

Table 1 shows that the Pearson product moment correlation on the strength of relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state. It is observed that at the sample size of 1340, the calculated value of r was 0.72. This is above the average r value of 0.50. Hence, there is a positively high relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools students in Nasarawa state.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between erotomatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state?

Table 2. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing the Strength of Relationship Between Erotomantic Disorder and Suicidal Ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State

Variables	N	r	Remarks
Erotomatic Disorder	1340	0.67	Positively High Relationship
Suicidal Ideation	1340		

Table 2 shows that the Pearson product moment correlation on the strength of relationship between erotomantic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state. It is observed that at the sample size of 1340, the calculated value of r was 0.67. This is above the average r value of 0.50. hence, there is a positively high relationship between erotomantic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa state .

Hypothesis 1 (Ho₁): There is no significant relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state. To test this hypothesis, the researcher used Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistics. The result is included in Table 3

Table 3. Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing Significance of Relationship Somatic Disorder and Suicidal Ideation

Variables	N	r	p-value	sig	Remarks
Somatic Disorder	1340	0.72	0.000	0.05	significant
Suicidal Ideation	1340				

From table 3, it is observed that at the sample size of 1340 respondents, the calculated value of r is given as 0.72. the p-value (probability value) is 0.000 which is less than stated p-value of 0.05 hence, hypothesis 1 is rejected implying there is a significant relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state.

Hypothesis 2 (Ho₁): There is no significant relationship between erotomatic disorder and ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state.

To test this hypothesis, the researcher used p-values of Pearson moment correlation. The result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing Significance of Relationship between Erotomatic Disorder and Suicidal Ideation

Variables	N	r	p-value	sig	Remarks
Erotomatic Disorder	1340	0.67	0.021	0.05	significant
Suicidal Ideation	1340				

From Table 4, it is observed that at the sample size of 1340 respondents, the calculated value of r is given as 0.67. the p -value (probability value) is 0.021 which is less than the stated p -value of 0.05 hence, hypothesis 2 is rejected implying there is a significant relationship between erotomatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state.

Discussion

Findings on hypothesis 1 showed that there is a significant relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa state. This finding is in agreement with Erdinc and Vedat (2023) which indicated that somatic disorder is significantly related to suicidal ideation. This means that individuals plagued with cases of somatic are prone to suicidal ideation. People with somatic disorder have excessive thoughts, feelings and behaviours relating to the physical symptoms. The physical symptoms may or may be associated with diagnosed medical conditions which if not controlled may lead to acts of suicide.

Findings on hypothesis 2 showed that there is a significant relationship between erotomatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa state. This finding is in agreement with those of Showdown (2017) which indicated that delusional disorder had a significant effect on risk of suicide such as somatic and erotomatic in Sydney, Australia. This shows that erotomatic form of disorder is likely to expose learners' tendency towards suicidal ideation in secondary schools. Erotomatic is a condition that is sudden, and also chronic and which has the tendency or capacity to promote cases of suicidal ideation in a learner.

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is There is a significant relationship between somatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state. Findings further reveal that there is a significant relationship between erotomatic disorder and suicidal ideation of Public Senior Secondary School students in Nasarawa state. Based on these results, it was therefore recommended among others that schools in collaboration with parents should subject learners with somatic cases to clinical treatment as well sessions counselling therapy so that thoughts of attempting to commit suicide can be eliminated from their minds. Furthermore, guidance and counseling services should be revived in schools and professional school counselors be recruited for the purpose of addressing cases erotomatic disorder. This will help in reducing cases of suicide.

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