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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ASSOCIATION PROBLEMS THAT LED ADOLESCENTS TO SUICIDE IN THAILAND

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Abstract

Suicide is one of the most serious health crises in the world, affecting both adults and adolescents. Suicide warning signals, as well as risk factors, are numerous. Why people wish to murder themselves is still a mystery. Furthermore, suicide occurs for a variety of reasons in these conditions, including mental illnesses, social isolation, a skewed worldview, and etc. However, we have devised a strategy to handle this problem, and also statistics on children who commit suicide in both developed and developing countries (New Zealand and Thailand).

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Introduction:-

Suicide is a leading cause of death around the world, and it is one of the most confusing and devastating human behaviors. The majority of suicide research has been directed by verbal theories with unclear definitions and poorly defined connections(1). Suicide is also a serious self-injurious behaviour which is having the evidence of purpose to die(6). Annually, more than 800,000 individuals die by suicide throughout the world. By 2020, it is predicted that 1.5 million people will have committed suicide. In 2015, the suicide mortality rate was 10.7 per 100,000, or roughly one death every 20 seconds. Furthermore, Suicide is the 15th greatest cause of death worldwide, accounting for 1.4 percent of all deaths(7,8). Moreover, loneliness is one of the main cause of suicide, which can spread through a social network, resulting in negatively skewed social perception, increased sickness and mortality, and, in the elderly; for example dementia or Alzheimer's disease(2).

Suicide among school-aged children (7–12 years) and adolescents (13–20 years) is referred to as youth suicide. These adolescents are vulnerable to mental health issues by nature, particularly during their adolescent years(3). This stage of one's life is marked by movement, changes, and transitions from one state to another across multiple domains. Young individuals must make key specific decisions regarding their lives, such as school, living circumstances, peer group, and much more. They must also face new challenges in terms of creating their own identity, self-esteem, increasing independence and responsibility, and forming new close relationships, among other things(4). Meanwhile, they are affected by continuing and changing psychological and physical processes. Additionally, kids are frequently presented with high, perhaps unreasonable, expectations from significant family and friends. Such situations usually result in feelings of hopelessness, insecurity, stress, and a sense of loss of control(5).

Therefore, young people need major supportive resources, such as a stable living situation, intimate friendships, a structural framework, and economic means, to handle these issues and successfully cope with these feelings. The statistics on young suicides are especially shocking: according to the most recent data (2014), there are suicidal incidents per 100,000 individuals among youths aged 15 to 19, and Russia continues to lead the globe in the incidence of teen suicides(20).

In our research, we will be focusing on listing other causes that lead adolescents to commit suicide in Thailand. Likewise, we will provide the specific statistics of suicides in Thailand compared with New Zealand.

Suicide warning signs

There are many warning signs of suicide that our research found. These suicide warning signs are significant indicators that a person is in serious danger and requires immediate assistance(21,22,23), which include:

1. Expressing a desire to die or commit suicide;
2. Looking for a way to commit suicide;
3. When someone shows a sense of hopelessness or a lack of direction;
4. Talking about being trapped or in excruciating pain;
5. Talking about being a burden to others;
6. Increasing alcohol or drug addiction;
7. Acting anxious, impatient, or reckless;
8. Too little or too much sleep;
9. Withdrawal or a sense of isolation;
10. Expressing anger or threatening to seek revenge
11. Mood fluctuations that are intense.

How suicide ideation occur (risk factors)

Suicide is more frequently in older people than in younger people, but continues to be the leading cause of death in late childhood and adolescence around the world(4). According to CNA news, Thailand, which is one of the most highest suicide rate in Southeast Asia, is coping with a mental health crisis while dealing with a pandemic. The COVID-19 epidemic has resulted in an increase in suicides in Thailand. Around 2,551 people committed suicide in the first half of 2019, increasing by 22% over the same period the previous year. Due to health officials, the rise of suicide was linked to pandemic-related stress(24).

In Thailand, a suicide attempt occurs every 10 minutes(24,27). Thailand's annual suicide rate was 8.8 per 100,000 of the total population in 2019, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), whereas the global age-standardised average is 8.0 per 100,000. Age-standardization indicates that differences in age structures between nations have been eliminated. In comparison, suicide rates in other ASEAN member states on the WHO list ranged from 3.2 per 100,000 people (the Philippines) to 11.2 per 100,000 people (Singapore) (25,26). Furthermore, deep-seated cultural and economic issues that led to Thailand's relatively high suicide rate, according to associate professor Antonio L. Rappa of Singapore University of Social Sciences, who has researched Thai culture, history, and politics for over 20 years(24,28,29). Turning to the suicide rate among adolescents in Thailand, nowadays, it cannot be ensured that the age ranges of adolescents will be the same because they can change over time and this also depends on the country that they live in(18).

Since humans, like monkeys and apes, are social creatures, living alone may be distressing. The first cause of suicide is social isolation that builds a sense of loneliness, which impacts our psychological well-being, physical health, and also longevity, which can result in suicidal ideation. Therefore, John Cacioppo, a neuroscientist, declared that loneliness has developed as an alarm signal to ensure that we can keep ourselves securely living in our social cocoon(10,11,12). Loneliness was discovered to be a significant health problem worldwide by the World Health Organization in 2019(13).

Another cause of suicide would be the biased world-view can increase suicide proportion(14,15). Furthermore, social helplessness can be dangerous since, of all the creatures on earth, we are the most reliant on other people(4). The majority of studies confirm that mental disorders closely link with suicide(16,17). There still have a lot of motives of escalating in suicidal thoughts is associated with definite characteristics and other causes, which is consisting of(19):

1. Psychiatric disorders such as depression, conduct disorders, bipolar, and substance abuse
2. Psychiatric comorbidity such as the combination of mood, disruptive and substance abuse disorders.
3. Family dysfunction and the history behind their families
4. Environment risks including presence of a firearm in the home
5. Situational crises; for example, traumatic death of a loved one, physical or sexual abuse, family violence, bullying.
6. Stress from the parents that put too much of their expectation on the teenager to succeed

7. Lack of a support network

Plan to prevent teenagers from suicide*A. What we can do*

- Create a club where we can support those teens who are thinking about suiciding, and give them advice on our research. However, since we are not the real doctors we will mostly focus on giving them comfort zones where they can complain and shout out what is on their mind.
- Stop bullying others in order to prevent someone from feeling in a negative way because if they think negatively, they might commit suicide.

B. Role of schools

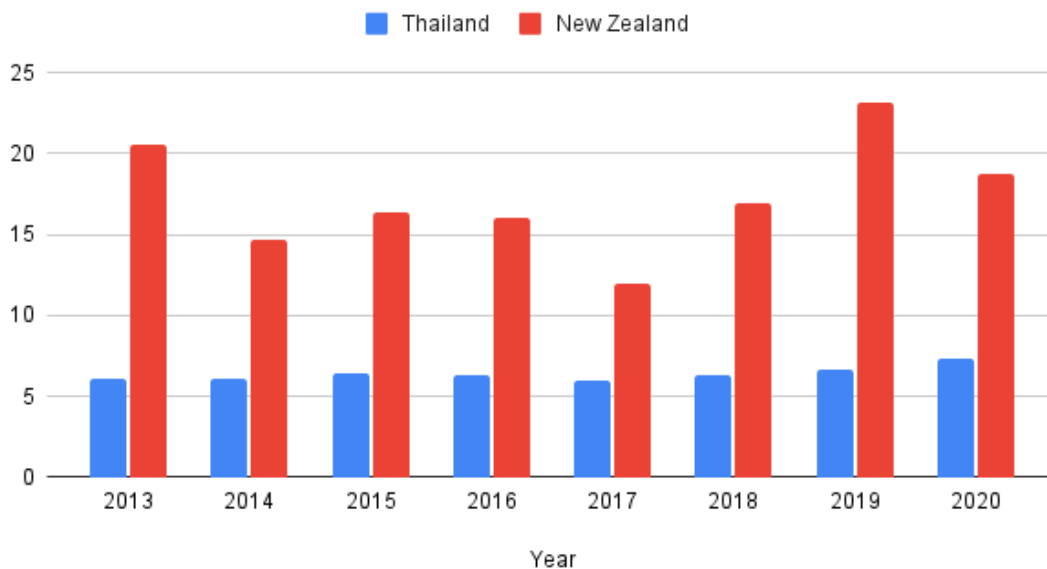
- School can be on the Lookout, meaning students with mental issues, or domestic problems could come and ask advice especially about suiciding. Similar to the student counciler, but just specifically focus on suiciding issues that the student's have and share deeper advice.
- Another way is that school could do a google form survey asking about the obstacles they have been facing. In our opinion, it must be a required form since students with real problems might hesitate to share their experiences or issues(30).
- Teachers can be one of the participants by not giving many assignments since an overloaded workload can create stress for the students, which is one of the mental illnesses.

C. Parents Participation

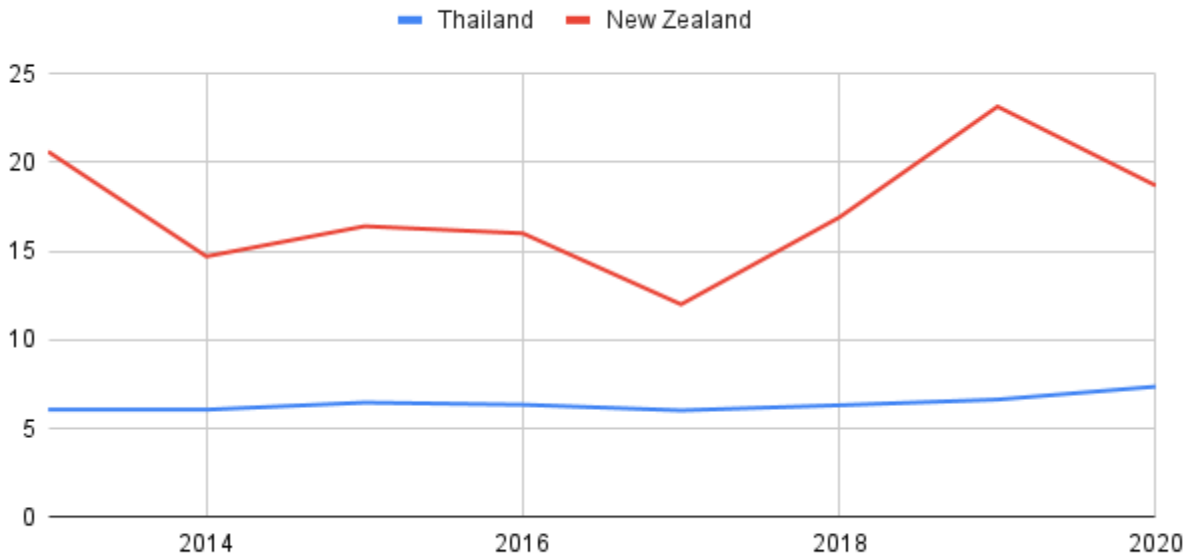
- It must be difficult for parents to directly ask their kids about the mental issues, or obstacles that their kids are having since they might hesitate to share because family is not everyone's comfort zone. On the other hand, parents may research for new ways to treat their children correctly, and learn not to walk across the boundary of their kid's privacy as well.

D. Friend Participation

- Friends are one of the most effective factor that neither cause victims to suicide, or be completely normal. Friends can give a true cheerful sentence which would show their tenderness and friendship against the victim as well as giving the victim comfort zone. Giving a comfort zone will probably be hard since everyone does not have the same comfort zone so giving cheerful words, supporting the victim's dream, helping the victim when he/she's in need, and conveying the victim in a correct way, meaning don't bring the victim to parties, alcohol, and drugs(31).

Statistic between Thailand and New Zealand**Suicide rates per 100,000 children**

Thailand and New Zealand



Year	Thailand	New Zealand
2013	6.08	20.6
2014	6.07	14.7
2015	6.47	16.4
2016	6.35	16
2017	6.03	12
2018	6.32	16.9
2019	6.64	23.14
2020	7.37	18.69

The bar graph, the line graph, and the table illustrate the proportion of adolescent suicides per 100,000 youths from 2013 until 2020 in Thailand and New Zealand. Overall, it can be seen that the suicide rate of adolescents in New Zealand was higher than that in Thailand over the last 7 years.

The suicide rate of teenagers in New Zealand has fluctuated wildly. In 2017, the suicide rate rose gradually from 12 to 23.14 people in 2019 and then dropped suddenly to 18.69 people in 2020. The suicide rate of youngsters in Thailand has been steadily on an upward trend. It moderately increased from 6.08 people in 2013 to 6.64 people in 2019 and slightly increased to 7.37 people.

Interestingly, New Zealand is a developed country, while Thailand is an undeveloped country. Even though the child suicide rate in the first half of New Zealand fluctuated, that in Thailand gradually soared. However, in the latter rate of both countries, while the child suicide rate in New Zealand gradually decreased, that in Thailand slightly

increased. Therefore, these rates can be used to predict that the suicide proportion in New Zealand might gradually drop and that in Thailand it might continuously rise(32,33).

Conclusion:-

In summary, it is difficult to understand suicide ideation and relevant problems that can cause suicide to occur. Suicide was the fourth leading cause of death among 15–29 year-olds (9), which included many Asian countries. We could see that competition in academics, the stress of achievement, and the feeling of failure that many countries face are some of the most important reasons for the increased number of teenagers ending their lives. We all know that committing suicide or harming yourself is not a good choice. However, there are some ways that can stop this problem. Most of these ways need parents, friends, and guardians to watch, remain calm, warn, help, and teach them what is wrong and what is right, as well as find a better way for those kids who solve their problems. In the future, we hope to see the rate of teenagers committing suicide decrease. However, it must be helped by people around the victims, which might be you, and that is the main reason why we decided to do this research.

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