

Socioeconomic Factors and Suicide in India: A National Analysis

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Abstract:

Suicide is a worldwide complex phenomenon as well as a major public health concern. According to WHO, about one million people die by suicide every year, which is a matter of main concern. **Objective:** The article is an attempt to understand the suicide scenario in India with the help of existing literature and the data from the period of 1967 to 2021. **Methodology:** The Information is collected by secondary data (Research Papers are based on suicide in India and worldwide), different data sources are NCRB, News, WHO Report and state level reports. **Findings:** There is a steady increase in the number of suicides during the study period around one person every 40 seconds, the main causes factors of which were domestic problems, illness, marriage issues, love affairs, bankruptcy and unemployment etc. after that it has been seen that most of the suicides were committed by housewives, self-employed people, salaried people, unemployed people, students and people working in the agriculture sector. The economic status has been found that 64.2 percent of the total suicides were committed by persons whose annual income is less than one lakh. **Suggestion:** There is a need to increase awareness among people, campaign to reduce stigma, Regulation of over the counter medication, In which area more work needs to be done as well as provision of some main policies should also be made by the government.

Keywords: Family problems, Agriculture sector, Unemployment, lack of Awareness and Economic status.

Introduction

Suicide is a major public health problem. Suicide has remained one of the leading causes of death in the Western world for the past decade. Suicide does not only mean loss of life of a person but also affects the mental, physical and emotional stress of family members, friends and relatives and also increases the cost of public resources as people, who commit suicide They often require support from health care and psychiatric institutions.

According to WHO, in 2020, about 1.53 million of these people committed suicide and 10 to 20 times more people attempted suicide worldwide. This estimate represents an average of one death every 20 seconds and one attempt every one to two seconds. India Ranks 41st in increasing order of rate of suicide with a rate of 12.9/100,000 reported in 2019 as compared by 2017-2018. Every year, approximately one million people die by suicide, of

which 86% are from low- and middle-income countries. Suicide is one of the three leading causes of death for young people under the age of 25. And it also accounts for 10%-20% of all female deaths within a year after giving birth. Although its informational value is low, the presence of psychopathology remains perhaps the most important factor in suicide. Thus about 90% of population cases are due to psychiatric disorder especially major depression, substance abuse etc. Problems with help-seeking, social communication and self-disclosure are also risk factors for suicide, as are personality traits of aggression and impulsivity. All of these factors are highly correlated with suicidal behavior across psychiatric samples and nosologically boundaries.

Meaning

Suicide means that sometimes people adopt this method to escape from their pain or suffering and think of ending their life. At that point we can say that he is attempting suicide or died by suicide. To end one's life is called suicide.

Objective of the study

1. To identify key Socio-economic factors linked to suicide.
2. To analyze the impact of socio-economic struggles on suicide rates.

Table: 1
Number of Suicides in India During 1967 to 2021

Year	Male	Female	Transgender	Total
1967	22637	16192	-	38829
1968	24464	16224	-	40688
1969	25947	17686	-	43633
1970	28846	19582	-	48428
1971	26326	17349	-	43675
1972	26923	16678	-	43601
1973	25231	15576	-	40807
1974	27791	18217	-	46008
1975	26074	16816	-	42890
1976	24042	17373	-	41415
1977	23453	16265	-	39718
1978	24137	16070	-	40207
1979	22980	15237	-	38217
1980	24188	17475	-	41663
1981	23864	16381	-	40245
1982	26520	18212	-	44732



1983	27260	19319	-	46579
1984	29296	21275	-	50571
1985	30460	22351	-	52811
1986	31271	23086	-	54357
1987	34292	24276	-	58568
1988	37755	26515	-	64270
1989	40212	28532	-	68744
1990	43451	30460	-	73911
1991	46324	32126	-	78450
1992	47481	32668	-	80149
1993	49851	34393	-	84244
1994	52752	36443	-	89195
1995	52357	36821	-	89178
1996	51206	37035	-	88241
1997	56281	39548	-	95829
1998	61686	43027	-	104713
1999	65488	45099	-	110587
2000	66032	42561	-	108593
2001	66314	42192	-	108506
2002	69332	41085	-	110417
2003	70221	40630	-	110851
2004	72651	41046	-	113697
2005	72916	40998	-	113914
2006	75702	42410	-	118112
2007	79295	43342	-	122637
2008	80544	44473	-	125017
2009	81471	45680	-	127151
2010	87180	47419	-	134599
2011	87839	47746	-	135585
2012	88453	46992	-	135445
2013	90543	44256	-	134799
2014	89129	42521	16	131666
2015	91528	42088	7	133623
2016	88997	41997	14	131008
2017	89019	40852	16	129887
2018	92114	42391	11	134516
2019	97613	41493	17	139123

2020	108532	44498	22	153052
2021	118979	45026	28	164033

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Ministry of Home Affairs Report 2021

The gender wise details of total suicide and suicide victims in India are given in Table 1. It shows the total suicide cases for the period from 1967 to 2021. It is known from the given data that there was a continuous increase in suicide cases in our country India from the year 1967 to the year 1970. Initially, in the year 1967, the total suicide cases were 38829, of which 22637 were men and 16192 were women. But in the year 1970, this figure increased to 48428 and an increase of about 10,000 cases was seen here in 3 years.

After this, from the year 1971 to the year 1981, a continuous decline has been registered in the total suicide rate. The figures which had increased to 48428 in the year 1971 had come down to 40245 by the year 1981. But after this, from the year 1982 to 2021, there was a continuous increase in the total suicide cases and from 44732 suicide cases in the year 1982 to 1164033 in the year 2021, which is not considered a good sign for the economy of any country. Till the year 2013, only men and women had a share in these total suicide figures, but for the first time in the year 2014, 16 cases of bisexuals were reported and which had now increased to 28 in the year 2021.

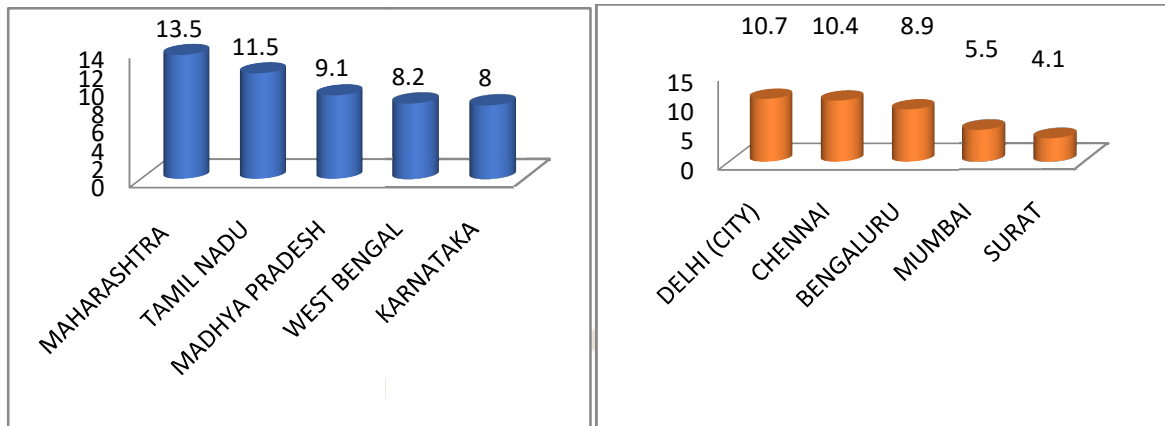
Table: 2
Rate of Suicides – 2021 (State/UT - wise)

Sr. No.	State/UT	Number of Suicides	(%) Share in Total Suicides
1	Andhra Pradesh	8067	4.9
2	Arunachal Pradesh	160	0.1
3	Assam	3262	2
4	Bihar	827	0.5
5	Chhattisgarh	7828	4.8
6	Goa	321	0.2
7	Gujarat	8789	5.4
8	Haryana	3692	2.3
9	Himachal Pradesh	889	0.5
10	Jharkhand	1825	1.1
11	Karnataka	13056	8
12	Kerala	9549	5.8
13	Madhya Pradesh	14965	9.1

14	Maharashtra	22207	13.5
15	Manipur	49	0
16	Meghalaya	226	0.1
17	Mizoram	99	0.1
18	Nagaland	43	0
19	Odisha	5651	3.4
20	Punjab	2600	1.6
21	Rajasthan	5593	3.4
22	Sikkim	266	0.2
23	Tamil Nadu	18925	11.5
24	Telangana	10171	6.2
25	Tripura	771	0.5
26	Uttar Pradesh	5932	3.6
27	Uttarakhand	717	0.4
28	West Bengal	13500	8.2
	Total (States)	159980	97.5
	Union Territories		
29	A & N Islands	159	0.1
30	Chandigarh	120	0.1
31	D & N Haveli And Daman Diu	171	0.1
32	Delhi (Ut)	2840	1.7
33	Jammu & Kashmir	247	0.2
34	Ladakh	11	0
35	Lakshadweep	1	0
36	Puducherry	504	0.3
	Total (UTs)	4053	2.5
	Total (All India)	164033	100

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Ministry of Home Affairs Report 2021

Figure: 1
Top 5 state & city Wise Major Percentage of Suicides in India 2021 In (Percent)
(A) (B)



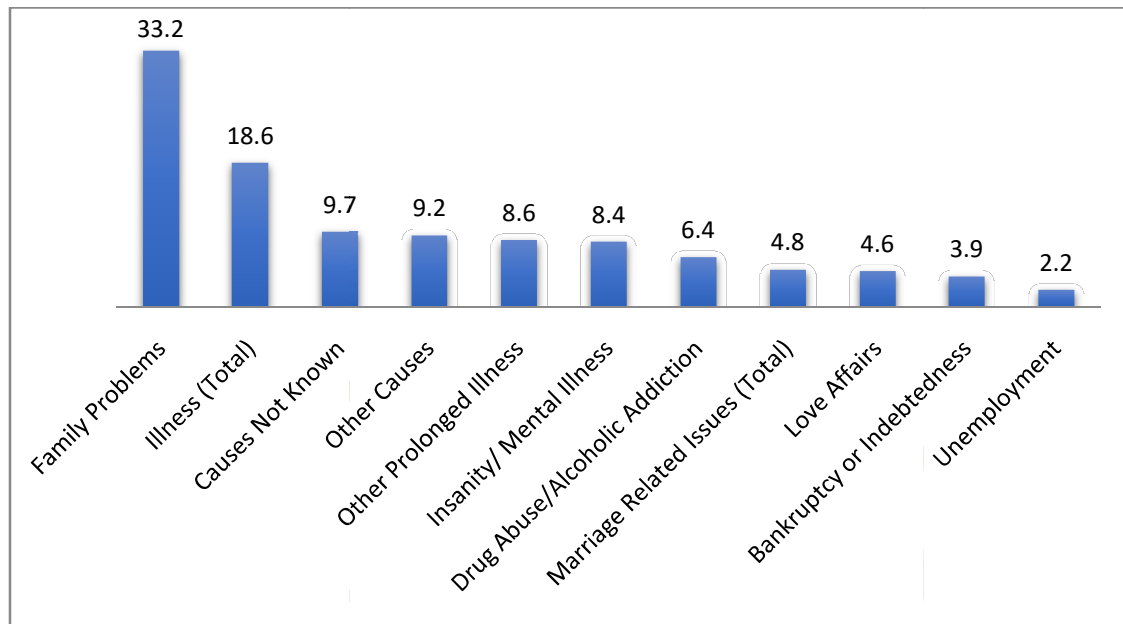
Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Ministry of Home Affairs Report 2021, and calculated by Author

The incidents of suicide in the state and union territory during the year 2021 and its percentage in total suicides are shown in Table2.

The data given in this table clearly shows that Maharashtra recorded the maximum number of suicides at 22,207. After this, cases of 18,925 suicides were registered in Tamil Nadu, 14,965 suicides in Madhya Pradesh, 13,500 suicides in West Bengal and 13,056 suicides in Karnataka. This accounted for 13.5%, 11.5%, 9.1%, 8.2%, and 8.0% of total suicides respectively. These five states of the country recorded 1% of the total suicides. The remaining 49.6% suicides were reported in 23 states and 8 union territories.

Thus the five cities with the highest number of suicides are shown in the figure: 1 (B). In which the city with the maximum population, Delhi is at the top, which shows 10.7 percent of the total suicide, along with this Chennai is on the second number 10.4 percent Bangalore 8.9 percent Mumbai 5.5 percent, and Surat 4.4 cases have been registered.

Figure: 2
Causes – wise Distribution of Suicides during 2020 (All India)



Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Ministry of Home Affairs Report 2021, calculated by Author

In today's time, suicide has become a big challenge before us. Since Covid 19 these numbers are continuously increasing. Table 2 is showing the main causes of suicides in the year 2021. It can be seen in this figure: 2 that 33.2 percent people have committed suicide only because of family problem. After this, the second main reason is illness, due to which 18.6 percent people have committed suicide, similarly 9.2% of the main reasons are also due to unknown reasons, apart from these, there are other main reasons such as drug abuse, marriage related issues, love affair, bankruptcy and unemployment etc.

Among the various reasons for suicide, cases of suicides due to family problems and illness have been recorded more than the average in the year 2021. Orissa, Tripura, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, and Telangana were the top states in suicides due to family problems in the year 2020. Similarly, Punjab, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh were at the top in suicides due to illness.

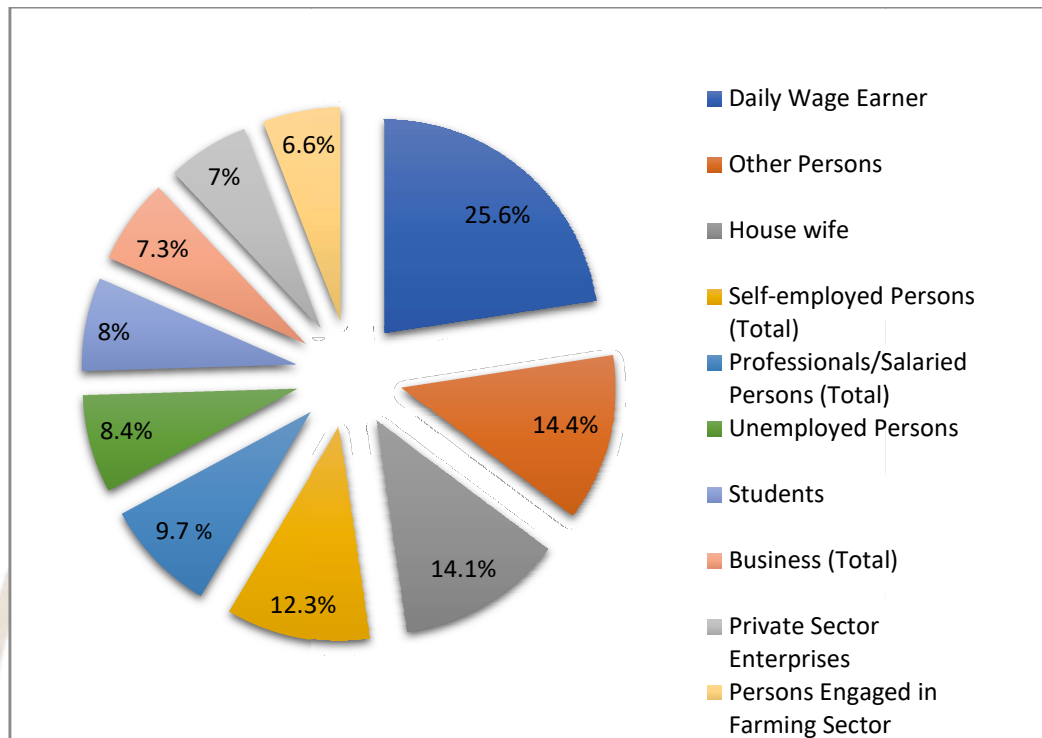
Table: 3
Profession-wise Distribution of Suicides during 2021 (All India)

Sr. No.	Profession	Male	Female	Trans-gender	Total	% Share
1	House wife	0	23178	1	23179	14.1
2	Professionals/Salaried Persons	14117	1752	1	15870	9.7

	(Total)					
	2.1 Government Servants (Total)	1651	247	0	1898	1.2
	2.1.1 Central/UT Govt. Servants	350	31	0	381	0.2
	2.1.2 State Govt. Servants	983	148	0	1131	0.7
	2.1.3 Other Statutory Body/etc.	318	68	0	386	0.2
	2.2 Private Sector Enterprises	10235	1196	0	11431	7
	2.3 Public Sector Undertaking	2231	309	1	2541	1.5
3	Students	7396	5693	0	13089	8
4	Unemployed Persons	11724	1981	9	13714	8.4
5	Self-employed Persons (Total)	18803	1426	2	20231	12.3
	5.1 Business (Total)	11273	782	0	12055	7.3
	5.1.1 Vendor	4243	289	0	4532	2.8
	5.1.2 Tradesmen	3502	131	0	3633	2.2
	5.1.3 Other Business	3528	362	0	3890	2.4
	5.2 Other Self-employed Persons	7530	644	2	8176	5
6	Persons Engaged in Farming Sector	10228	653	0	10881	6.6
	6.1 Farmers/Cultivators	5107	211	0	5318	3.2
	6.1.1 who cultivate their own land with or without assistance of agricultural labourers	4627	179	0	4806	2.9
	6.1.2 who cultivate on leased land/work on lease/on other's land (known by different nomenclature) with or without assistance of agricultural labourers	480	32	0	512	0.3
	6.2 Agricultural Labourers	5121	442	0	5563	3.4
7	Daily Wage Earner	37751	4246	7	42004	25.6
8	Retired Persons	1371	147	0	1518	0.9
9	Other Persons	17589	5950	8	23547	14.4
10	Total	118979	45026	28	164033	100

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Ministry of Home Affairs Report 2021, and calculated by Author

Figure: 3
Top 10 Profession-wise Distribution of Suicides in 2021 (All India)



Source: calculated by Author

The statistics of suicide by professional is shown in table 3 and figure 3. In which it can be seen that the profession with maximum suicide is daily wage earner which was 25.5 percent of the total suicides and the highest that out of total 42004 suicides of daily wage earner were 37751 males and 4246 were female.

After this, 14% of the total suicides were of housewives. The majority of suicides by housewives were reported in Tamil Nadu (3221 out of 23,179), followed by Madhya Pradesh (3055 out of 23,179), and Maharashtra (2861 out of 23,179). This was 13.9%, 13.2% and 12.3% respectively of the total suicides.

After this, 12.3 percent of the total suicides are self-employed, 9.7 percent salaried, 8.4 percent unemployed, 8 percent students and 6.6 percent are related to the agriculture sector, as we all know that India is an agricultural country. A large number of people in the country get employment from the agriculture sector, but due to lack of facilities, favorable prices, a total of 10,881 people associated with the agriculture sector committed suicide in the year 2021, which accounts for 6.6% of the country's total suicides (1, 64, and 033). Maximum cases of suicides by persons involved in agriculture were reported in Maharashtra at 37.3%, followed by Karnataka at 19.9%, Andhra Pradesh at 9.8%, Madhya Pradesh at 6.2% and

Tamil Nadu at 5.5%. Along with this, there were some states or union territories in which suicides of farmers and agricultural laborers were zero such as West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Tripura, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry.

Table: 4
Social, Economic and Educational Status-wise Distribution of Suicides during 2021
(All India)

I. Marital Status

Sr. No.	Marital Status	Male	Female	Trans-gender	Total	Percentage Share
1	Un-Married	27305	12096	20	39421	24
2	Married	81063	28680	6	109749	66.9
3	Widowed/ Widower	1470	1015	0	2485	1.5
4	Divorcee	494	294	0	788	0.5
5	Separated	626	243	2	871	0.5
6	Others	1419	773	0	2192	1.3
7	Status not known	6602	1925	0	8527	5.2
8	Total	118979	45026	28	164033	100

The social status of suicide victims is shown in Table 4.(1) According to 2021 data, suicides by married people were the highest, which was 66.9% of the total suicides (109749 out of 164033).

Unmarried people were on the second number, which was 24.0% of the total suicides. Apart from these, 15% (2485) of widow/widower, 0.5% (788) of divorcee and 0.5% (87) of breakup were registered among the total victims of suicide. It is clearly visible from the statistics that according to 2021 in our country, there were maximum cases of suicides by married people.

II. Economic Status

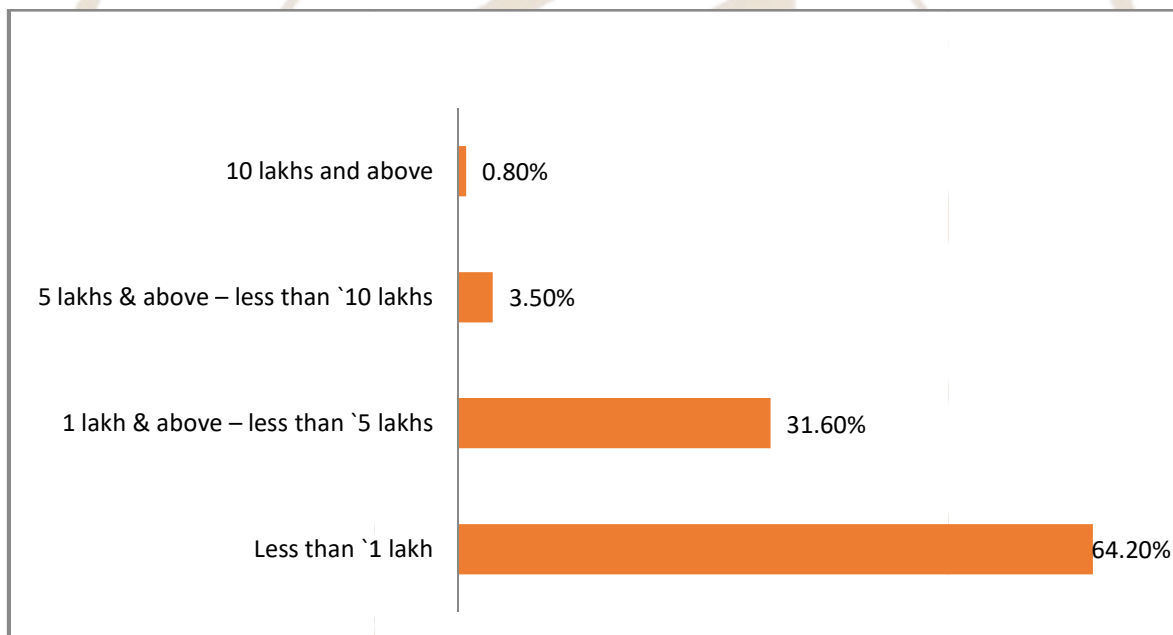
Sr. No.	Economic Status	Male	Female	Trans-gender	Total	Percentage Share
1	less than `1 lakh	72818	32397	27	105242	64.2
2	1 lakh & above – less than `5 lakhs	40838	10973	1	51812	31.6

3	5 lakhs & above – less than `10 lakhs	4454	1234	0	5688	3.5
4	10 lakhs and above	869	422	0	1291	0.8
5	Total	118979	45026	28	164033	100

The economic condition of the suicides is shown in Table 4 (II). In this, on the basis of income, the suicides committed by the victims are divided into 4 categories.

First is the suicide committed by persons earning less than one lakh. Second are suicide by persons earning 1 lakh & above but less than `5 lakhs. Third is suicide by persons with income 5 lakhs & above but less than `10 lakhs. And fourth is the suicide committed by persons having income 10 lakhs and above.

Figure: 4
Economic Status wise Suicides (2021) (in Percent)



Source: Calculated By Author

The economic condition of the suicides is shown in Figure 4. It has been observed that suicides were committed more in the year 2021 by persons whose annual income is less than one lakh, which was 64.2% (105242) of the total suicides.

In the second place, there were 31.6% (51812) cases of people whose annual income was from 1 to 5 lakhs. Out of total 1 05242, 72818 were men and 32397 were women. The cases of suicide by men were more than women. And the cases of suicide by persons whose annual

income was from 5 to 10 lakhs were only 3.5% (5688), of which the cases of men were more than those of women.

III. Educational Status (2021)

Sr. No.	Educational Status	Male	Female	Trans-gender	Total	Percentage Share
1	No Education	12242	5774	2	18018	11
2	Primary (upto class-5 th)	18323	7552	3	25878	15.8
3	Middle (upto class-8 th)	22898	8501	5	31404	19.1
4	Matriculate/ Secondary (upto class-10 th)	29241	10079	13	39333	24.0
5	Hr. Secondary/ Intermediate/ Pre-University (upto class-12 th)	19479	7011	2	26492	16.2
6	Diploma/ Certificate/ ITI	1654	334	0	1988	1.2
7	Graduate and above	5542	2070	1	7613	4.6
8	Professionals (MBA etc.)	376	161	0	537	0.3
9	Status Not Known	9224	3544	2	12770	7.8
10	Total	118979	45026	28	164033	100

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Ministry of Home Affairs Report 2021 and calculated by Author

Table 4 (III) describes the educational status of suicide victims. It can be seen that most suicide victims 24% (39333 out of 164033) were educated up to matriculation/secondary level. Followed by 19.1% cases (164033 to 31404) educated up to middle class (Class 8). Out of these 31404, 22898 were male and 8501 were female. It can be seen that men are more educated than women.

The least number of suicide cases were only 1.2 percent (164033 in 1988) and 0.3 percent (164033 in 531) of people educated up to diploma/IIT and professional (MBA etc) level. It is known from the statistics of the year 2021 that the cases of suicide by those who are educated up to matriculation / secondary level are more.

Percentage of suicide by Educational Level (2019-20021)

Education Level/Year	2019	2020	2021
No Education	12.6	12.6	11
Primary Level	16.3	15.8	15.8
Middle Level	19.6	19.5	19.1
Matriculate/Secondary Level	23.3	23.4	24
Higher Secondary Level	14	15.9	16.2
Diploma	1.2	1.3	1.2

Graduate & Above	3.7	4	4.6
Professionals (MBA etc.)	0.4	0.3	0.3
Status Not Known	8.9	7.2	7.8
Total	100	100	100

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Ministry of Home Affairs Report 2021 and calculated by Author

Like the year 2021, in the years 2020 and 2019 also maximum cases of suicides were of matriculation / secondary education. Their share was 23.3% and 23.4% in 2019 and 2020, which increased to 24% in 2021. After this, middle class (class 8) suicide cases were 19.6 percent in 2019, which decreased to 19.5 percent in the year 2020, and after that in the year 2021, these cases decreased to 19.1 percent. It is clear from the data that a continuous decline was recorded in the cases of suicide till the middle class (class 8). It can be seen here that there is a continuous increase in the suicide cases of matriculates, which is not considered a good sign for the economic and social condition of any country.

In the recent past, the cases of suicides are increasing more and more, the main reasons for which are explained in Figure 2. Now the topic is that what are the methods people adopt for suicide in the year 2020-21 easily and painfully available methods for suicide like consuming poison, jumping, hurting oneself, hanging, planting, coming under the train, etc. were the main methods adopted. In 2020-21, suicide by setting fire was also a main method adopted by women, but this method was adopted less by men as compared to women.

Conclusion

In the context of India, there is a steady increase in the number of suicides, the main factors of which were domestic problems, illness, marriage issues, love affairs, defamation and unemployment etc. If we talk about professional status, then it has been seen that most of the suicides were committed by housewives, self-employed people, salaried people, unemployed people, students and people working in the agriculture sector.

According to statistics, most suicides are committed by married people, followed by unmarried people. While detailing the economic status, it has been found that 64.2 percent of the total suicides were committed by persons whose annual income is less than one lakh. Along with this, the rate of suicide was highest by persons up to matriculation or secondary education level.

Declaration: I declare that this Article has been written by me and has not been submitted for publication in another journal.

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