Original Research Paper　　　　**Education**

SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR ACCORDING TO THE PERCEPTION OF ACADEMICS FROM A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTE, MANAUS, BRAZIL

Alexsandra Cordeiro do Nascimento*	Postgraduate University Santa Tereza & Street Rio Madeira, 444 - Conjunto Vieiralves – Nossa Senhora das Graças-Manaus/AM. *Corresponding Author
Dayane Pereira Ambrósio	Postgraduate University Santa Tereza & Street Rio Madeira, 444 - Conjunto Vieiralves – Nossa Senhora das Graças-Manaus/AM.
Érica Lopes Soares	Postgraduate University Santa Tereza & Street Rio Madeira, 444 - Conjunto Vieiralves – Nossa Senhora das Graças-Manaus/AM.
Flávio Brito Gonçalves	Postgraduate University Santa Tereza & Street Rio Madeira, 444 - Conjunto Vieiralves – Nossa Senhora das Graças-Manaus/AM.
Luana Soares Marinho	Postgraduate University Santa Tereza & Street Rio Madeira, 444 - Conjunto Vieiralves – Nossa Senhora das Graças-Manaus/AM.
Davi Nogueira da Silva	Postgraduate University Santa Tereza & Street Rio Madeira, 444 - Conjunto Vieiralves – Nossa Senhora das Graças-Manaus/AM.

ABSTRACT　University students are going through a critical period of transition, they experiencing frustration because of the pressure to get good grades. The academic problems are one of the main reasons why students are attempting suicide ideation. Grounded on this, it is important analyze and estimate the risk of suicide in academics of a Higher Education Institution, Manaus-AM, Brazil. The study is structured as follows, first, an analysis of the literature about the problem exposed was carried out, later we carry out scientific and methodological research with the use of an electronic questionnaire. We finalize with discernment the results found. Based on the respondents responses it is necessary think on this problematic when facing the issue of suicide in students. Responsability is on everyone's part including parentes, government, media, teachers and non-governmental organizations (ONGs), to develop strategies to prevent and reduce suicide deaths.

KEYWORDS : university student, suicide, academic problems, suicidal behavior, academic pressure.

INTRODUCTION

According to the Pan American health Organization/World Health Organization (OMS), on september 10, solemnises the world day of suicide prevention, this severe problem of public health responsible for one death every 40 seconds in the world (United Nations, Organization in Brazil - ONUBR, 2016).

Studies have found that more than 80% of suicide deaths exhibited suicidal ideation (thought and planning) before their action. The cognitive impulsivity may be an important factor for the differential prediction between individuals with suicidal ideation and those who have made or will attempt suicide (Silva et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2014; Schulberg et al., 2005).

Depression and the tendency to commit suicide are issues correlated with the mental health of the man (Mustaffa et al., 2014). Then, the ideia of suicide is remarkable common among college students. University students are a particular group of people who are in a critical period of transition. Many college students experience frustrations because of competitive pressure to get good grades (Wu et al., 2009). Second Zong (2015), the main reasons why students attempt suicide ideation are "home problems" (30%), followed by "problems of peer relationships (26%), and "academic problems" (22%). Based on this, it is importante to analyze the risk of suicide in the academics of a higher education institution.

The study is structured as follows, first, an analysis of the literature about the problem exposed was carried out, later we carry out scientific and methodological research with the use of an electronic questionnaire. We finalize with discernment the results found.

METHODOLOGY

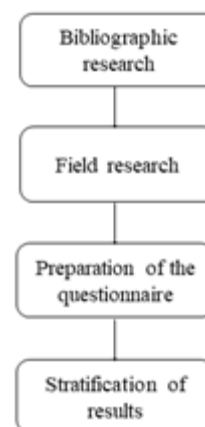The metodology used in the research was based on the following steps (Figure 1):

Figure 1. Flowchart of the methodological procedure.

Source: Own production.

The bibliographical research was carried out through of predominant articles about the subject: suicide behavior in higher education academics through eletronic research.

The field research was the stage carried out after the bibliographic study to have a good knowledge about the subject. So, the research was exploratory (Marconi & Lakatos, 2012), in which the purpose was to deepen the knowledge about the studied object. Can be used to facilitate the preparation of a questionnaire, or to serve as a basis for future research, helping to formulate hypotheses or in the more precise formulation of research problems (Mattar, 1996).

The construction of a questionnaire, according to Aaker et al. (2001), it is considered an imperfect art because there are no exact procedures to ensure that your measurement are reached with good quality. According to the autor, factors such as commom sense and researcher's experience can avoid several types of erros in questionnaires, such as the issues ambiguous potentially damaging, given it's influence in the range of erros. However, there is a sequence of steps logical that the researcher must follow to develop a questionnaire.

• Plan what will be measured: Evidencing the objectives, defining the subject of the research in it's questionnaire, obtaining additional information on the subject from secondary data sources and exploratory research, determining what will be asked about the subject.
• Formulate the questions to obtain the necessary information: For each subject, determine the content of each question.
• Define the text and order of the questions, the visual aspect of the questionnaire: Determining how the issues will be written, assessing each of the issues in terms of their ease of understanding, knowledge, and willingness of the interviewes.

The survey questionnaire had 14 closed-type questions. The questionnaire was applied online via Google Form containing a link to a secure web server, through which an automatic evaluation is carried out, presenting two personal questions (age and gender) and 12 general questions, related with suicidal behavior according to the perception of the university students. The questionnaire was applied to 101 individuals in January 2018. It is importante note that the respondents are strictly students and graduates of an Higher Education Institution from Manaus-AM, Brasil.

To perform the measurement of the data, the research was based on the voluntary responses of graduate and undergraduate invited to participate, the descriptive statistics were used, where the data presented in the questions were validate in the graph format elaborated by Google Form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

101 online questionnaires were applied 61,4% answered by women and 38,6% by men (Figure 2). The adults of 18 – 29 were the ones that stood out in the research with 60,4% of the interviewees (Figure 3).
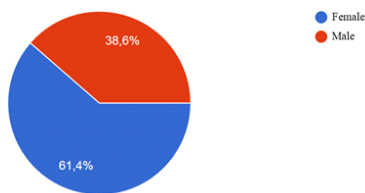

Figure 2. Measurement of men and women responding to the questionnaire.

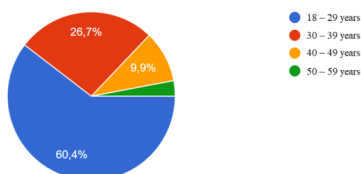**Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).**

Figura 3. Graph of the age groups of the interviewees.
Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 4 shows that 61,6% did not suffer bullyng at graduation. However, 27,3% suffered verbal bullyng in higher education. According to Bekiari & Pachi (2017), agressor tend to simultaneously practice bullying and verbal aggresion. Behavioral patterns range from a rather genaralized aggressiveness strategy from "totally offended" to "just excluded".
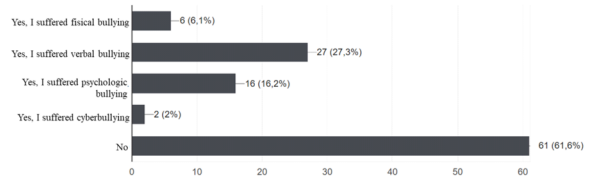

Figura 4. Bullyng data in higher education.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 5 shows that 62% of the interviewees did not suffer from mood disorders. Nevertheless, 25% responded "Yes, craze (euforia)". According Perlman & Liu (2014), the mania is multifaceted, identified as "euphoric activation", "overactive cognition" and "reckless overconfidence". An interesting fact is the 10% of the academics who presented depression. According to Damián et al. (2017), depending on the state of depression, can lead to the risk of mortality. However, when attempting to perfom any form of intervention, depression should be given appropriate attention and should be prevented before aggravating and becoming suicidal acts (Mustaffa et al., 2014).
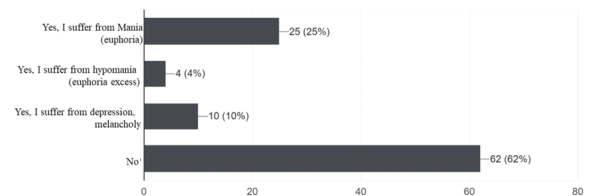

Figura 5. Índex of mood disorder of the interviewees.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 6 shows that 49,5% of the students answered that they did not need to move from city to enter higher education, but 10,9% answered "Yes, because i lived in a city that had no higher education and no job opportunity". According Hawthorne (2014), the transfer of capital, to the students continues to be challenging, taking into account the issues of family, cultural, economic and employment ties.
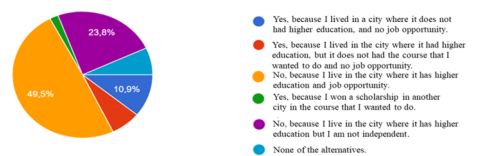

Figure 6. Graph related to the migration of higher education students.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 7 shows that 42% of the academics did not have time for

personal study. Due to work, they did not find time to study. According to Evans & Richardson (2017), the students need to reflect between work and study, because it is not easy to reconcile the two contexts. Then, the proposal is to the university integrate work and study through the integration of accredited part-time learning in the course, with this, universities would no longer see part-time students as an obstacle to their studies, but an activity that must be motivated and supported. College and course teams can also facilitate unlincensed part-time work by allowing students to "win as they learn" by extending the carrer service mandate.

6. Did you have time available to personal study?
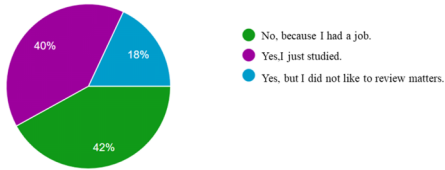100 answers

- No, because I had a job.
- Yes, I just studied.
- Yes, but I did not like to review matters.

Figure 7. Graph related to the study time of university students.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 8 shows that 56% of academics were not pressured by their family to be successful in the chosen profession. However, 18,2% answered "Yes", because my parentes pay the faculty and want give my best". In the study of Zong (2015), the parentes in Korea think that go to the best university is more important for their children wwith this, notes are considered essential at the gym.

7. Do you feel pressured by your family to be successful in the chosen profession?
99 answers

- Yes, because my parents pay for my college and they want I do my best
- No, because I am the one who paid for my college.
- I feel no pressure

Figure 8. Graphical of pressure family from the academics.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 9 shows that 77,2% of academic if charge much to obtain good grade. According Khan et al. (2014), most part of the college students were under pressure to obtain good grade, with this, the academic pressure was found as an important source of stress for many university.

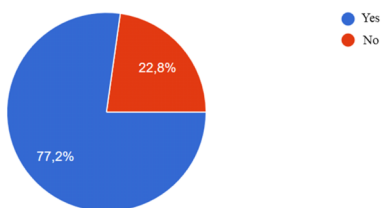8. Do you do your best to get good grades?
101 answers

- Yes
- No

Figure 9. Index of interest for good grades.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 10 shows that 67,3% of the academics during the exams,

seminar presentation, feel anxiety, such as nervousness. 12,9% of the students had headache. And 19,8% presented tremors in the body. The study applied by Reis et al. (2012), shows that students went through college admission process to assess psychological changes, as a result, as the tests approached, because of anxiety, students had joint pain and headach. According to the study of Martín et al. (2017), students who are able to control their attention processes and voluntary maintain their cognitive processes in academic tasks, can lower their levels of school anxiety because of concetration that allows self-control and emotion.

9. During exams, seminar presentations, do you feel anxiety enough to be sick?
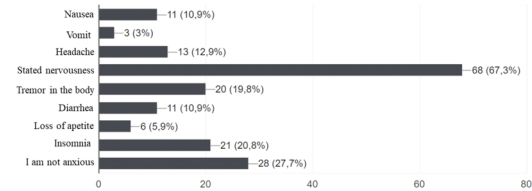101 answers

Figure 10. Anxiety level chart.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 11 shows that 66,7% of the interviewees did not acquire addictions during graduatin, na interesting was that 17,2% ate sweet to relieve the stressand only 4% used cigarettes. According to Singh (2017), says that socializing and exercising regularly smoothens the stress, bringing physical and mental benefit, and, that raising feelings of self-esteem, can significantly reduce stress. According to Kate et al. (2017), the mood affects the choice of foodand vice-versa. Nowadays, it is common for people to suffer from stress, so they can opt for diet items that improve mood. In the study of Hossain et al. (2017), says that smoking is started by students during the early years of adolescence and continues during the college years.

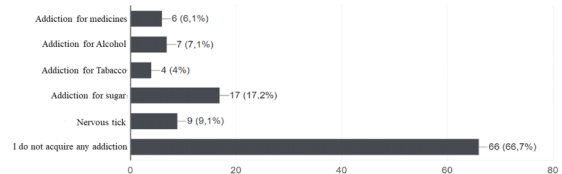10. During the graduation did you acquire some addiction to relieve stress?
99 answers

Figure 11. Index of vices acquired during graduation.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 12 shows that 56,4% of the academics had emotional disturbance with the conclusion of course work, 39,6% with the presentation of seminars. According to Silva et al. (2017), when students presente negative feelings, they impede impulse control awareness of their own emotions, even hindering the performance of tasks.

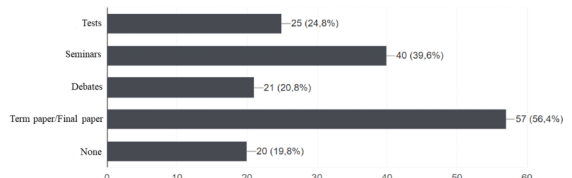11. What caused you emotional disorder during you graduation?
101 answers

Figure 12. Index of emotional disorders during gradutation.
Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 13 shows that 90,1% has no family history of suicide. Otherwise, 9,9% has a history of suicide in the family. According to Kučukalić & Kučukalić (2017), studies indicate that family members after suicide have problems, suffer from depression and somatic symptons more frequently, and a greater risk of suicide may occur in relatives after suicide. Stigma has the potential to bring shame and silence to family members, leading to social isolation, causing suffering and other psychological distress.

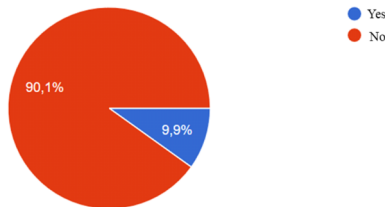### 12. Is there some recurrent family history of suicide?

101 answers

Figure 13. Family suicide history chart.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 14 shows that 14,9% has meet someone who commited suicide at graduation. According to Mustaffa et al. (2014), suicide is an issue that have to be dealt. The education of psychological changes after suicide in schools, institutions and workplaces shaped attitudes toward suicide attempts (Robinson et al., 2013). According to Zong (2015), are needed for students who feel suicidal ideias: 1) coonsultation with a especialist, 2) a place to comfortably leave their concerns, 3) a community where they can share their concerns and overcome them.

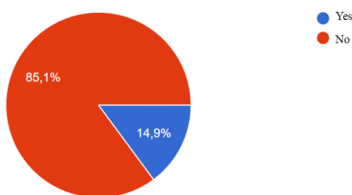### 13. Did you meet someone who committed suicide at graduation?

101 answers

Figure 14. Suicide rate at graduation.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

Figure 15 shows that 39,6% of the respondents do not know how to identify suicidal behavior. According to Breux et al. (2017), suicide prevention in schools starts with leaders and advocates of prevention, as well the risk and protective factors for suicide are numerous and dynamic, to create suicide safety interventions.

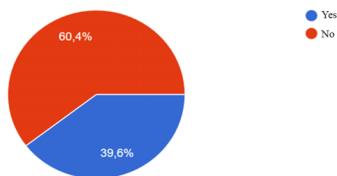### 14. Do you khow how to identify a suicidal behavior?

101 answers

Figura 15. Indices of identification of suicidal behavior on graduation.

Source: Data set by *Google Form* (2018).

CONCLUSIONS

The study conducted among students and university graduates shows that the suicidal idea is not at a critical level. With the results found in this research, we can conclude that a small number of students has suffered verbal bullyng in higher education, many academics charge a lot to get good grades, this pressure is an important source of stress, many students began to get addictions at graduation such as: eating sweets, smoking cigarettes and even ingesting alcoholic beverages, many academics had emotional disturbance with the presentation of seminars. However, based on respondents answer, it is necessary to think about this problem, when facing the issue of suicide in students, responsability is shared by all, including parents, teachers, government, media and non-governmental organizations (ONGs) to develop strategies to prevent and reduce suicide deaths. The community could create an open and supportive environment where students can be encouraged and ask for help, so students will seek help of their own free, overcoming suicidal ideation. Giving continue to this study, could be done a project to assess a number larger of academic and apply the means of prevention for suicidal ideation.

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