

Counselling for Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention in Nigeria

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Presentation Outline

PREAMBLE

- **INTRODUCTION**

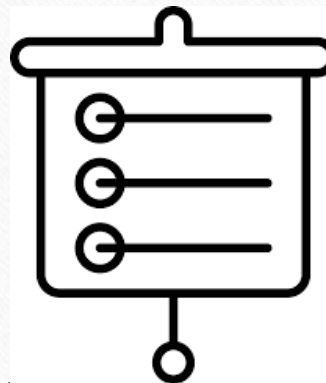
- Definitions, including SPIP
- Photo Speak

- **SUICIDES**

- Statistics and Causes
- Types of Suicide & Prevention Focus
- Professions & Professionals Involved

- **COUNSELLING FOR SPIP**

- Counselling Theories
- WHO Programmes



- **CASSON**

- Objectives & Activities
- World Suicide Prevention Day

- **INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION**

- Continuing Education
- Suicide Prevention Hotlines

- **SUMMARY & CONCLUSION**

REFERENCES & BIBLIOGRAPHY

THANKS!

Definitions of Suicide and of Suicide-related Terms

Etymologically, the word 'suicide' originated from the Latin terms for 'self' and 'the act of slaying', being *sui* and *caedere* respectively. Thus, the World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have the following definitions:

Suicide is the act of deliberately killing oneself. (WHO)

Suicide is death caused by injuring oneself with intent to die. (CDC)

TERM	DEFINITION
Suicide	A self-inflicted death with evidence (either explicit or implicit) of intent to die
Suicidal Ideation	Thoughts associated with killing oneself
Suicide Attempt	An act in which an individual tries to kill themselves but survives
Suicide Prevention	The use of counsellors to help clients avoid suicide and its aftermath
Suicide Intervention	Treatment or action initiated by a counsellor that is aimed at disrupting and/or alleviating client problems relating to suicide
Suicide Postvention	Help given by the counsellor to persons facing suicide bereavement
Assisted Suicide	Suicide effected with the assistance of another person, especially the taking of lethal drugs provided by a doctor for the purpose by a patient with a terminal illness or incurable condition
Mass Suicide	The simultaneous suicide of all the members of a social group and is closely linked to the human dimension of existence, although the social and cultural context may vary

News Headlines: 11th January 2024

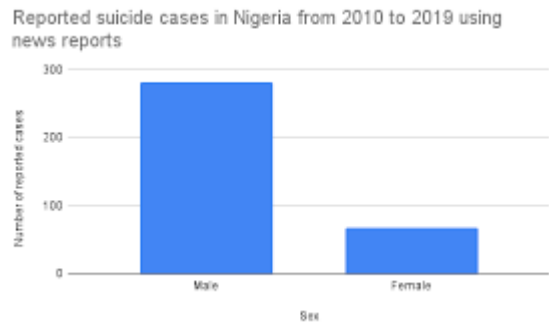
“Female Banker Commits Suicide in Lagos”



- Female banker commits suicide in Lagos over ‘hardship’ - *The Cable*
- Netizens mourn as female banker kills self, pens suicide note – *Punch Newspapers*
- 32-yr-old bank staff commits suicide - *Vanguard News*



what can we do?



Statistics and Causes of Suicides

Statistics of Suicides

- From WHO, CDC, etc... 2022 Data - reflects the magnitude of the problem
- Approx. 1m suicides yearly (1 every 40s)
- 17th leading cause of death
- 2nd leading cause of death in 15-29 year old
- Among 3 leading cause of death <25 years
- 86% suicides occur in LMIC
- 10-20% of deaths in women up to 1 year postpartum
- Suicide is normal reaction to abnormal set of circumstances
- In Africa/Nigeria, statistics vary widely between countries & regions with under-reporting due to stigma & cultural factors (incomplete or unreliable data)

Causes of Suicides

- i. Financial and other hardships due to the economic downturn (poverty, unemployment)
- ii. Failed marriage and other relationships (interpersonal conflict)
- iii. Loneliness (going through rejection or failure)
- iv. Depression and anxiety (high level of hopelessness & despair)
- v. Frustration (high degree of stress & mental suffering)
- vi. Extortions, blackmail, financial or other bullying impact.
- vii. Mental illness, drugs and substance abuse
- viii. Other illnesses, neurological disorders, cancer, HIV

In all these situations, suicide is one way of having control in uncontrollable situations... but it is definitely the wrong way, NOT the right way.

Types of Suicide and Efforts to Address Mental Health & Suicide Prevention in Nigeria

Types of Suicide

- Durkheim in 1897 identified 4 different types of suicide.

SUICIDE TYPE	DETAILS
Egoistic Suicide	Stems from absence of social integration by individuals who are social outcasts and see themselves as being alone and/or an outsider
Altruistic Suicide	Sacrifice of individual life to fulfil some obligation for the group
Anomic Suicide	Occurs due to lack of social regulation that occurs during high levels of stress and frustration
Fatalistic Suicide	Occurs when individuals are placed under extreme rules or high expectations

Suicide Prevention Focus

Today, there is a growing recognition of, and efforts to address mental health and suicide prevention issues in Nigeria through focus on:

- i. Advocacy and awareness campaigns
- ii. Education
- iii. Improving access to mental health services across the country
- iv. Research and data collection efforts to better understand scope of the problem and inform targeted interventions and policies.

Professions & Professionals Involved in Suicide Prevention

Professions

- All 'helping fields' such as:
- Psychology
- Psychiatry
- Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT)
- Counselling
- Social work
- Clinical rehabilitation counselling
- Behavioral medicine
- Addiction treatment
- School counselling
- Psychotherapy
- Pastoral counselling

Counselling Professionals

The interdisciplinary approach used in suicide prevention, intervention and postvention cuts across many professionals

- Professional Counsellors
 - School counsellors
 - Pastoral counsellors
 - Clinical psychologists
 - Psychotherapists
- Others
 - Lay counsellors
 - Therapists
 - Psychiatrists
 - Psychologists
 - Social workers



Towards Suicidal Persons [1]: What to do & What not to do

SUICIDE Vs SUICIDAL	
Considered a Tragedy	Considered Attention Seeking
People are Present	People Try to Avoid Them
People Feel Bad	People Feel Irritated
People Wish That They 'Saw the Signs'	People Pretend the Problem Isn't There & dismisses it
Everyone Wishes They Hadn't Done it	No one believes that they will ever do it

If someone tells you that they are feeling suicidal, **TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY**. No matter how many times they have said it, you need to treat and act on it like it's the first time. **It could save their life!**

- If someone tells you they are feeling suicidal, **TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY**. No matter how many times they have said it, you need to treat and act on it like it's the first time. **It could save their life!**
- Don't ignore them!

Towards Suicidal Persons [2]: What to say & What not to say

Action Steps to Help Them-I

1. Ask if they are okay (let them know how much they mean to you)
2. Listen & be there for them (be available to them; empathise, not judge)
3. Help them connect to help liners (let them know it is okay to be sad)
4. Stay connected to them (make sure they know they are not alone)

(Adapted from: Expand your knowledge in Mental Health with MDIS)

What Not to Say to Them

1. “It’s not that bad,” “Stay positive” or “Don’t say that”
2. “I know how you feel” or “I would be devastated if you were gone”
3. “You have a lot to live for”
4. “Other people have it worse” or “You’re being selfish”
5. “You’ll go to hell”

Towards Suicidal Persons [3]: How to Act & How not to Act

Action Steps to Help Them-II

- Check if the risk is imminent
- Confirm suicidal thoughts
- How to help someone who is suicidal
- Seeking emergency help
- Other helpful resources

(Schimelpfening and Block (2023))

Be forthright

- **Don't be afraid to ask, “Are you having thoughts of suicide?”**
- Studies show that asking at-risk friends and family members if they are thinking about suicide does not increase suicidal thoughts.

Counselling for Prevention of Suicide in Nigeria (and Elsewhere)

1. Accessible Counseling Services
2. Addressing Stigma
3. Awareness and Education
4. Community Involvement
5. Crisis Intervention and Hotlines
6. Follow-up and Aftercare
7. Government Support
8. Integration with Healthcare Services
9. Partnerships with NGOs
10. Research and Evaluation
11. School-based Programmes
12. Training for Counselors
13. Utilisation of Technology

Counselling Theories Used for Prevention of Suicide

1. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
 2. Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
 3. Existential Therapy
 4. Interpersonal Therapy (IPT)
 5. Mindfulness-based Therapies
 6. Narrative Therapy
 7. Psychodynamic Therapy
 8. Solution-focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)
 9. Trauma-focused Therapy
- Each of these theories and approaches offer unique perspectives and techniques to address suicide ideation and behaviour.
 - In suicide prevention counselling, therapists often integrate elements from multiple theoretical approaches based on the unique needs and preferences of the client.
 - The therapeutic relationship, empathy, validation and collaborative goal-setting are essential regardless of the theoretical orientation employed.

Two Theories for Suicide Prevention in Nigeria

Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

- CBT helps individuals recognize and change negative thought patterns and behaviours contributing to suicidal ideation.
- It focuses on developing coping skills, problem-solving strategies, and increasing resilience to manage stressors effectively.

Interpersonal Therapy (IPT)

- IPT focuses on improving interpersonal relationships and communication skills, which may be strained or lacking in individuals at risk of suicide.
- It helps individuals address interpersonal conflicts, grief, and social isolation, which can contribute to feelings of hopelessness and despair.

WHO Programmes for Suicide Prevention: mhGAP

- One of the priority conditions identified as part of the WHO mental health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) & the regional strategy recommends
- Development of a recording and reporting system
- Development of services for recognition and management of mental, neurological and substance abuse disorders in primary care, special programmes for vulnerable populations such as adolescents, older people and women
- Reducing access to the means of committing suicides
- There are other related WHO programmes one can adopt or adapt for the prevention of suicides e.g. SURPIN.



Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON)

- “CASSON is a professional organization dedicated to promoting the development of counselling profession in Nigeria.
- Established in 1983, CASSON which has chapters in all the states of the Federation and in the FCT, serves as a platform for counselling practitioners, educators, researchers, and students to collaborate, share knowledge and advocate for the advancement of counselling services and practices across Nigeria.
- In summary, CASSON plays a vital role in advancing the counselling profession, promoting ethical standards, and advocating for the well-being of individuals and communities in Nigeria.”



To what extent is the FCT Chapter fulfilling CASSON's Objectives and Activities?

CASSON Objectives

- Advocacy
- Collaboration and Networking
- Community Outreach
- Ethical Standards
- Professional Development
- Research and Publications

CASSON Activities

- **Advocacy Campaigns**
- **Collaborative Projects**
- **Conferences and Workshops**
- **Publications**
- **Training and Certification**

10th September: World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD)

- “Established in 2003 by the International Association for Suicide Prevention in conjunction with the WHO, 10th September of each year aims to focus attention on the issue, reduces stigma and raises awareness among organizations, governments and the public, giving a singular message that suicides are preventable.
- **“Creating Hope Through Action”** is the triennial theme for the World Suicide Prevention Day from 2021-2023. This theme serves as a powerful call to action and reminder that there is an alternative to suicide and that through our actions we can encourage hope and strengthen prevention.”



International Participation

American Counseling Association (ACA)

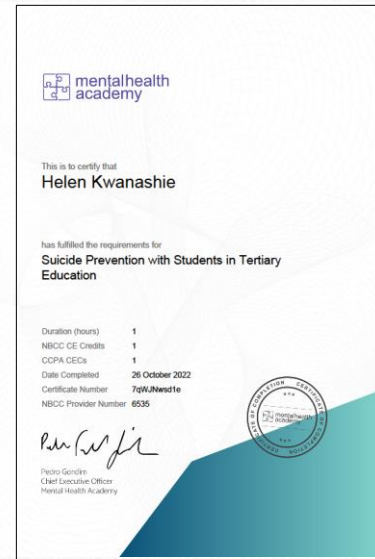
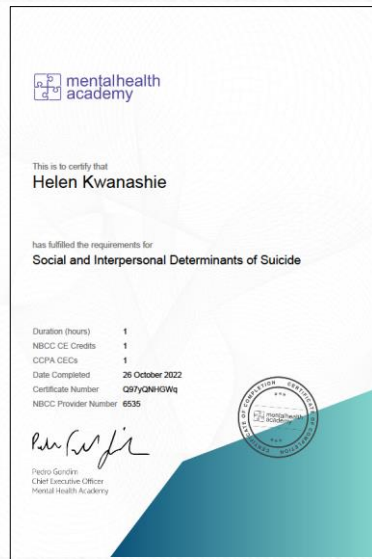
- A not-for-profit, professional and educational organization that is dedicated to the growth and enhancement of the counseling profession.
- Founded in 1952, ACA is the world's largest association exclusively representing professional counselors in various practice settings.
- <https://www.counseling.org>

International Association of Psychology and Counseling (IAPC)

- It is the mission of the International Association of Psychology and Counseling to advance knowledge and excellence in education and clinical practice in psychology, counseling, and related professional fields.
- <https://intapc.org>

Continuing Education...

Mental Health Academy (MHA)

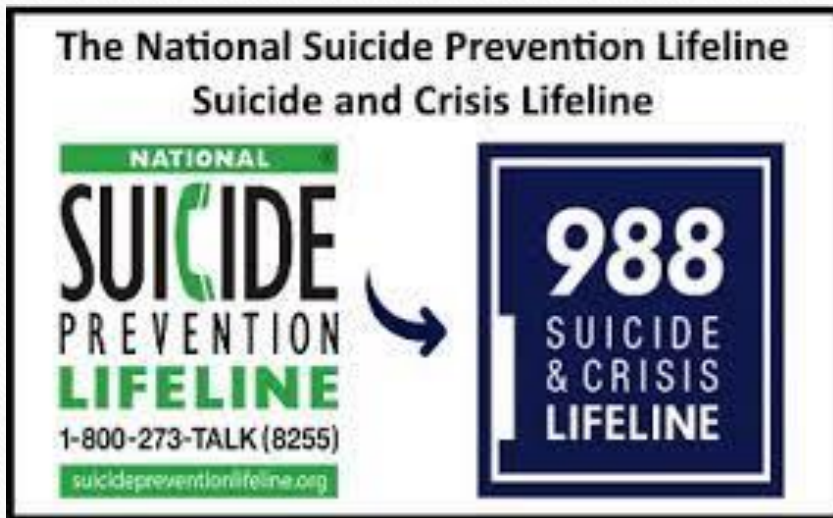


American Counseling Association (ACA)

1. Social Determinants of Mental Health: Case Conceptualization \$0, \$42
2. Counseling Interventions for Victims of Intimate Partner Violence: A Systemic Review \$0, \$42
3. Therapeutic Community Substance Abuse Treatment with Incarceration \$0, \$42
4. Law & Ethics: Suicide and Threats of Self-Harm \$29, \$49

Suicide Prevention Hotlines & Lifelines

Suicide Hotlines in USA & Canada



Suicide Hotlines in Nigeria

SURPIN Helpline Nigeria:
0800 0787 746

The Human Development
Initiative: 0808 0551 376



Summary 1/3: A 3x3 Matrix for Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention

SUICIDE...	A	B	C
PREVENTION	Public Awareness and Education	Risk Assessment and Intervention	Access to Mental Health Services
INTERVENTION	Crisis Intervention	Psychotherapy and Counselling	Medication Management
POSTVENTION	Bereavement Support	Risk Assessment and Monitoring	Prevention of Suicide Clusters

- Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention are three interconnected aspects of addressing suicide risk and supporting individuals who are either experiencing suicidal ideation, have been affected by suicide, or both.

Summary 2/3: Counselling Missives to Yourself & Others

“For everyone, self-care is an absolute *essential*”

“It’s my time to take care of myself... to make changes in my life for *me.*” - Becky



“No one should ever have to walk *alone!*”

Summary 3/3: *A Way Other Than Suicide*



- “There is usually a way where there seems to be no way!”
- Let’s say ‘**NO**’ to Suicide!

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Li, W.L. (1973). Durkheim's Typology of Suicide: Some Observations from Taiwanese Data. *International Review of Modern Sociology*. 3(2): 214-223.

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Thanks for Listening!

Questions & Comments?

- Chairman, Exco & Members of CASSON FCT Chapter
- Chair & Members of Seminar Organising Committee
- Co-speakers & Attendees at the Seminar
- Ladies & Gentlemen

