

Case Report

Case study of Dyadic death in Bangladesh: by Hanging, Strangulation and Poisoning

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Abstract:

Here described two cases where mother is the main perpetrators of the event and the victims were their children in the age group of 1 year to 12 years. In 1st case 35 years lady killed her three daughters ages 12, 9, 1 by strangulation then hanged in south surma Sylhet city. In 2nd case A 32 years old married women killed her two sons (ages 5 & 8yrs) by poisoning and later she died by hanging in Sylhet city. Autopsy examination revealed ligature mark over neck consistent with that of antemortem hanging and ligature marks round the child's neck were strangulation case also poison found by chemical examination. So it's time to take awareness within community and take prevention such like notorious incident.

Key words: Dyadic death, homicide, hanging, strangulation & poisoning

INTRODUCTION

Dyadic deaths (homicide – suicide) is defined as a dramatic violent event in which an individual kills another and subsequently commits suicide immediately or after certain period of time that may range from hours to 1 week. There is however no standardized operational definition.¹ The Hanzlick-Koponen typology has the following special classifications, which can be divided into two broad categories: single victim and multiple victim events. And according to this, single victim events (dyadic deaths) include homicide - suicide or suicide pacts.² The most common type of dyadic deaths involve killing of intimate partners and perpetrators are male in most of cases.^{1,6} A woman who kills her child, according to is an evil trick of nature. The idea of striking an innocent and defenseless being is in itself unacceptable

according to our society; when the person performing the act of violence is the infant's parent, therefore the person who by definition is supposed to care for the child, it is all the more difficult to understand the situation. In this type of felony, the following categories can be distinguished: neonaticide, when the crime takes place on the same day in which the child is born; infanticide when the victim is less than a year old; peticide if the minor's age is between 1 and 16. The present case reports are being reported with an attempt to evaluate these episodes so that preventive measures could be initiated or adopted. In the present report, in every case, homicide was followed by suicide of the perpetrator. All the perpetrators were mother and the victims were their children in the age group of 1 years to 12 years. All homicide-suicide episodes took place in urban area. Homicide-suicide episodes are complex phenomenon and multidimensional events associated with the additive or multiplicative effects of many circumstances including psychopathological, psychosocial, economical, cultural or environmental stressors.

CASE PRESENTATION

Case 1: A 35 years lady find dead along with three others child ages 12, 9, 1. Lady was found hanging from the ceiling of her tin-roofed hut while the bodies of her three children were found lying on the floor with nooses around their necks. Police have recovered the dead bodies from their house at south Surma in Sylhet city, Bangladesh and sent for autopsy. The female was a housewife and education wise she was under matriculate. The lower class family composed of husband; wife and three little daughter were living in rented tin-roofed hut. On that tragic day, when her husband had gone for work, the female strangulated her daughters with nylon rope and then hang herself with nylon rope to ceiling hook. When husband arrived at home, the room was locked inside. After peeping from window, the mother and daughter seems hanging. Accordingly police was informed and inquest was made. The cause of homicide-suicide episode was related to family dispute due to financial crisis. Autopsy examination revealed ligature mark over neck consistent with that of antemortem hanging and ligature marks round the child's neck were strangulation case.

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Table-1: observation table of two cases:

Case no	Perpetrator	Relationship of victim with Perpetrator	Cause of death	
			Victim	Accused
1.	Mother (35 yrs)	Daughters (12, 9 & 1 yrs)	Hanging	Strangulation
2.	Mother (32yrs)	Sons (5 & 8yrs)	Hanging	Poisoning

Case 2: A 32 years old married women killed her two sons (ages 5 & 8 years) by poisoning and later she died by hanging. The female was housewife also middle socio economic status. She lived in her own house 2nd floor. Husband was business man and lived away from home. On that shock day she didn't give her sons to Scholl. She gave them breakfast with poisons in morning. After died of two sons she hanged. Police brought 3 dead bodied for autopsy. Viscera are preserved and sent for chemical analysis also finds poison. Autopsy examination revealed ligature mark over neck in case of women consistent with that of ante mortem hanging. Here the cause of homicide-suicide episode was related to family dispute due to extramarital affairs.

DISCUSSION

Dyadic death episodes mostly seen in low socio- economic, less educated or illiterate families and included single victim or multiple victim events. Demographic characteristic of perpetrator and victim are more or less same as observed in various reports. Most episodes occurred at home and perpetrator is known to victim. Extra familial incidents are rare.^{7, 10} The cardinal feature is that all the perpetrators were mother and the victims were their children in the age group of 1 year to 12 years. In Bangladesh context, mother is placed next to God. Since conception she nurtures and cares for her child. She is considered as follower, a guide, a teacher, a companion, an advisor and so on. But in this contemporary period, with changing in pattern of life style and changing morals & principles, she is expected on one side, to help, earn and lend the family and on other side to take care of family with traditional household work. With continuing large-scale urbanization and increasing trend of nuclear families, the parents are always in stress especially the mothers since she have to take care of husband as well as her wards. When a phenomenon of homicide-suicide occurs involving mother as perpetrator, many questions arises need attention, many facts need consideration and many circumstances need evaluation. In developed countries, use of firearms is common method of homicide

in dyadic deaths .Other weapons associated with this includes knives, blunt objects, and, other methods of homicide have included strangling /asphyxiation, poisoning and physical assault or vehicular accidents. The phenomenon of dyadic deaths is different from suicides. In suicide episodes, an individual prefer to die alone whereas in homicide-suicide incidents the person kills other family members and then commit suicide. Why such differentiation occurs need thought. It may possible that the person believed that after his demise there would be no one to take care of his family members and therefore he would have acted in such hostile manner. The contrary may also be possible that if "I am not living then no one had right to live". It is difficult to interpret the thought retrospectively. Homicide-suicide episodes are complex phenomenon and multidimensional events associated with additive or multiplicative effects of many circumstances including psychopathological, psychosocial, economical, cultural or environmental stressors. Establishing a psychiatric diagnosis is difficult when both the perpetrator and victim are dead but in future psychological autopsy methodology could prove helpful to prevent such tragedies.

CONCLUSION

The social impact of homicide-suicide as phenomenon is larger than that of homicide and suicide cases taken into consideration individually. In Bangladesh scenario financial distress and family feud are main factor for dyadic death. Also jealousy, conflict over extramarital, sexual, love affairs, threat of separation or actual separation from intimate partner is important factors seen in spousal or consortial homicide. Financial burden and marital disharmony are the principle reasons for suicide in Bangladesh. So it's time to take awareness within community and take prevention such like notorious incident.

REFERENCES

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