### Abstract

**Background:** Suicidal ideation is common among patients suffering depression. In addition, suicidal ideation is one of the challenging issues in psychiatric healthcare institutions.

**Aim:** The aim of this paper is to provide information about suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression regarding risk factors, predictors, instrumentations and finally recommendations regarding suicidal ideation among patients with depression.

**Methods:** This paper is an initial review and will be expanded to use databases; Cumulative Index of Nursing Allied and Health Literature (CINAHL), Pubmed and Science Direct to retrieve the published evidence on the topic by using appropriate keywords.

**Conclusion:** Although several of the reviewed studies showed that risk factors were found to influence patients with suicidal ideation. In the future, research may focus on discovering useful strategies to managing and preventing suicidal ideation among patients with depression.

**Key words:** Suicide, Depression and Suicidal ideation

### Introduction

Suicidal ideation is common among patients with depression, but it often remains undetected (Gensichen, Teising, König, Gerlach, & Petersen, 2010; Keilp, et al., 2012). In addition, Wang, et al. (2009) mentioned that depressive disorders are a common psychiatric illness and its one of most serious symptoms is suicidal ideation or suicidal ideation.

On the other hand, suicidal ideation is likely to represent a phase preceding suicidal acts among patients suffering depression (Sokoero, et al., 2006). According to Ben-Zeev, Young and Depp, (2012) suicidal ideation is considered a dangerous step leading to subsequent suicidal behaviors. Furthermore, suicidal ideation or suicidal thoughts are a major risk factor for suicide attempts (Ben-Zeev, Young, & Depp, 2012).

The definition of suicidality is a suicidal ideation and suicidal behavior (Gensichen, et al., 2010). According to Pinninti, Steer, Rissmiller, Nelson and Beck. (2002) suicidal ideation is defined as the current wishes and plans to commit suicide.

Suicide attempts and suicidal ideation are major public health problem and a leading cause of death worldwide (Desseilles, et al., 2012). In addition, approximately 13.5% of the U.S. population has experienced suicidal thoughts at some point during their lives.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to understand the previous studies regarding risk factors of suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression; in addition to focus on the predictors of suicidal ideation among patients with depression and mention some instruments to assess the suicidal thoughts and suicidal ideation; finally, achieve the best recommendations regarding suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression.
Methods

This paper is an initial review and will be expanded to use databases; Cumulative Index of Nursing Allied and Health Literature (CINAHL), Pubmed and Science Direct to retrieve the published evidence on the topic.

Multiple words were used to search for literature on suicidal ideation among patients with schizophrenia. The following words were placed in the online indexes individually and in combination with one another: suicide, Depression and Suicidal ideation among patients with depression.

The inclusion criteria were:

1. Adult patients suffering depression.
2. Patients with suicidal ideation.
3. Articles written in English language.

Results

Based on the inclusion criteria, a total of 10 published articles were selected and formed the basis for this review. Most articles were published in nursing journals and in psychiatry journals. Because suicidal ideation is a multidimensional phenomena, there are many factors that could influence suicidal ideation in depressed patients. This review is highlighting some of the identified factors that affecting suicidal ideation among patients with depression in respect of the purpose of this paper.

Literature Review

Many studies were conducted to predict the risk factors of suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression. In addition, impact of suicidal thoughts among patients in psychiatric and mental settings and how to assess suicidal ideation among patients with depression. Firstly, I will discuss studies investigating correlations between risk factors and occurrence of suicide. Secondly, I will focus on studies concerning the predictor of suicidal ideation on depression patients. Thereafter, I will discuss studies performed with instruments to assess the suicidal ideation. Finally, I discuss recommendations regarding suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression.

Risk Factors for Suicidal Ideation on Depression

Sokero, et al. (2006) found that the decline of suicidal ideation is strongly correlated with decline of depressive symptoms and level of hopelessness. In addition, hopelessness and severity of depression are risk factors for suicidal behaviors (Sokero, et al., 2006).

Furthermore, Ortin, Lake, Kleinman and Gould (2012) found that high levels of sensation significantly increase the risk of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts of depressive symptoms and substance use problems.

On the other hand, Chellappa and Araújo (2007) showed that insomnia is the risk factor to development of suicidal ideation and suicidal plans. In addition, sleep disturbances should be considered during assessment of suicidal thoughts among patients with depression. According to Sugawara, et al. (2012) gender is considered one of the risk factors for suicidal thoughts. Moreover, male patients with depression are more likely to have suicidal thoughts.

Predictors of Suicidal Ideation

According to Gensichen, et al. (2010) severity of depression is a predictor for suicidal ideation in psychiatric and mental health care settings among patients with major depression. Additionally, physical pain may be associated with suicidal ideation. On the other hand, Ben-Zeev, et al (2012) suggest momentary ratings of sadness, tension and boredom predicted suicidal ideation in the following hours of the same day.

Instrument for Assessing Suicidal Ideation

Desselle, et al. (2012) suggested that the Hamilton scale for depression (HAM-D), and Beck’s scale for suicidal ideation are valid to assess suicidal ideation. According to (Keilp, et al., 2012) they found five items of Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) most strongly correlated with suicidal ideation. These items include subjective depression factors (sadness, pessimism, loss of interest, body image and guilt). Overall, severity of depression is more strongly linked with the presence of suicidal ideation compared with absence of suicidal ideation.

On the other hand, Pinninti, et al. (2002) suggest that the Beck scale for suicidal ideation (BSI) is a useful self report instrument for assessing the severity of suicidal ideation in patients diagnosed with depression, schizoaffective and bipolar disorder. Therefore, approximately 90% of patients who are diagnosed with depression, schizoaffective and bipolar disorder may be self - administered the BSI after their thoughts of suicide are in decline.

Discussion

Literature supports the many risk factors affecting on suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression including: hopelessness, severity of depression, level of sensation seeking, insomnia , sleep problems and predominance of male patients are the main results that have been found in (Chellappa & Araújo, 2007; Ortin, Lake, Kleinman, & Gould, 2012; Sokero, et al., 2006 & Sugawara, et al., 2012). Moreover, literature supports the many predictors of suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression in the followings hours of the same day such as: sadness, tension and boredom which are the main results that have been found in (Gensichen, et al., 2010).

Additionally, literature supports the many scales assessing suicidal ideation including Beck scale for Suicidal Ideation (BSI) and Hamilton scale for Depression (HAM-D), are the main results that have been found by (Desselle, et al., 2012; Pinninti, Steer, Rissmiller, Nelson, & Beck, 2002).
**Recommendation**

According to the represented studies in this review paper, the following recommendations are suggested. Firstly, Beck scale for Suicidal Ideation (BSI) should be an ongoing assessment of suicidal ideation. Secondly, more studies need to be done to understand the impact of suicidal ideation among patients with depression in psychiatric settings and their families and their societies. Finally, psychiatric nurses should be educated and trained in managing and preventing of suicidal ideation in psychiatric and mental health care settings.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this paper is to gain an understanding of the previous studies regarding the risk factors of suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression, in addition to focusing on predictors of suicidal ideation among patients suffering depression, and mentioning the best instrument to assess suicidal thought. Finally, we propose the best recommendations regarding suicidal ideation among depressed patients.

Several of the reviewed studies however showed that risk factors were found to influence patients with suicidal ideation. In the future, research may focus on discovering useful strategies to managing and preventing suicidal ideation among patients with depression.

**References**


