Language and themes of suicide notes: A psycholinguistic study

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Abstract
This study investigated the language and themes of suicide notes using a psycholinguistic approach. The ethical and moral considerations are not the main concern of this study, rather the language and themes of these suicide notes whether written or delivered orally/indirectly are the main objectives of this study. The study employed both documentary and survey research. It mainly used purposive sampling in selecting respondents who participated in the exercise from Nsukka Urban, Owerri municipal and its environs. The finding of the study indicate that, most of the suicide notes show deep sense of remorse in the choice of language despite the fact that suicide is associated with mental health. Specifically, those that ended their life showed some behavioral/outward signs in certain contexts as revealed by the finding. Also some of the suicide notes contain some flaws, which mainly hinge on ungrammaticality and illogical reasoning. The themes prevalent in these notes were the predicaments faced by the individuals and their family members and the need to end those challenges through self-execution. The findings also show that forgiveness being sort on the part of the family members also featured prominently. The study declare that since there are manifestation of depression and subsequent vocalisation (though usually indirect) of the intent by most of those who committed suicide, it is advised that families and members of the public should always look out for signs of depression and utterances that suggest that one is fed-up with events around him and provide succor on time before the act is perfected.

1. Background of the Study

Suicide is a taboo in Igbo land and most often not discussed, but whether discussed or not, it is one of the various ways many have adopted in order to escape from physical and mental torture in contemporary world. Also, at home or in the Diaspora, some Igbo have continued to end their lives through suicide due to one reason or the other. Suicide is an act that is frowned at in most cultures and in different countries of the world. Suicide basically is the act of intentionally taking one's life and as such happens when people direct violence at themselves with the sole objective of ending their lives (Osogu, 2022). World-wide, the act of taking one's life has been on the increase and is not restricted to any race or social status. It is estimated that up to one million people die each year due to suicide (Karbeyaz, Alokaya, Balci and Urazel, 2014, Yari, and Alan, 2024, Osogu, 2022). Suicide though involves one dying an un-natural death, is not in itself an accident. Most often the act is contemplated for a long time and this can manifest in various ways either verbally, or in other forms via actions and inactions.

Since the victims are gone before nay investigation commences, there may not be any clue, except if there were actions, inactions or utterances that x-ray the person's feelings, prior to his exit. If suicide note was left, Rani (2021) asserts that it becomes the widows to which the mind of the diseased can be read, and thus a valuable starting point for assessing and predicting suicide and pre-suicidal behaviours. Suicide is contemplated before the actual execution and

understanding and reading meaning in our brothers, friends, and sons etc. actions, in-actions and more importantly utterances may be essential in preventing the performance of the act.

Prospective candidate of self execution may show some behavioural changes among which in depression. But, Yari and Alan (2024) are concerned that although suicidal behaviours has been studied, empirically and clinically, the definition of the different subtypes and phenotypes of suicidal behaviours and mechanism underlying some of the risk factors (such as aggression, implosively, suicide intent) remain unclear. Even more worrisome in the fact that even though it is estimated according to Alabi, Ayinde and Abdulmalik (2014) that globally, about one million death occur from Suicide yearly, and this translate to one suicide every forty seconds, the incidence of attempted suicide is twenty-five times more common than completed suicide. Thus, the study of suicide and behaviours which precedes it is essential if this act of man's inhumanity to oneself can be minimised.

Various laws have been enacted all over the globe for suicide and attempted suicide, but the act goes on un- abated in Igbo land right from the ancient times. This act is committed by Ndi Igbo at home or in diasporas. Suicide is an abominable act and a taboo, as such stringent punishment is also given to the dead as some culture do not bury such persons, but throw them away to the evil forest. But even at that, all these have not prevented people from committing suicide, hence the need to study suicide notes and the last utterances of persons that committed suicide. This is because it is argued that suicide notes, while potentially giving insights into suicidal behaviours, may also represent a way of presenting the self as being a burden (Gunn Roseman, Shukusky, Loatman, and Lester, 2016) and sometimes being in pain that needs to be ended. The study of the language linguistic features and themes in suicide notes may thus become a window in which we can pip into the minds of persons who committed suicide.

2. **Objective of the Study**

The study has the following specific objectives:

i. To ascertain if there are behavioural/contextual cues that suggest the intent to commit suicide before the act.

ii. To identify the linguistic features in suicide notes.

iii. To find out the themes in suicide notes and how they x-ray the state of mind of persons who committed suicide.

3. **Research Questions**

i.   What are the behavioural/contextual cues that suggest the intent to commit suicide before the act?

ii. What are the linguistic features inherent in the suicide notes/utterances?

iii. How can the themes of the suicide notes x-ray the state of the mind of persons who committed suicide?

4.   Review of Literature

This review has been structured under the following sub-heading: Conceptual Studies, Empirical Studies and Theoretical Framework.

A.   Conceptual Studies

Suicide has been variously defined by different scholars, but whether it is an act of causing oneself to die, or attempt to kill oneself, the generally acceptable definition is that it is of public health concern globally. Morton (2006) while portraying the views of Retterstol (1993) and Marusic, (2004) assert,

> Essentially, suicide is one of these three ways; a deliberate act of self-destruction that result in death, a conscious self-directed act with intent to die, or a willful self-inflicted life-threatening act resulting in death.... The key differences in these definitions are on the theoretical orientations (e.g., Psychology, Sociology, etc.) and cultural influences (e.g., beliefs and value systems) of their creators.

Classifying this concept further, Fata, Yusuf, Kamal, and Namaziandost (2021) observe that in suicide, one is not taking the other's life, or carrying out harmful, illegal, or immoral acts that can cause death to others, but rather, it is the act of intentionally causing one's own death. So, suicide in all about self-inflected pains. But this crime is known most often when the culprit is no more. However, if suicide note or last utterances/actions of the person can be penciled down, then the reason(s) for the act may be known. Even if the reasons for the act cannot be deduced, at least, the state of the mind can be inferred.

According to Homan, et.al (2022), language is a potential source of predictors for suicidal thoughts and behaviours (STBs), as changes in speech characteristics, communications habits and word choice may be indicative of the intent to committee suicide and this can be categorised into speech or written language (in Facebook and other handles) and in suicide notes. The desire to die by suicide is affected by two distinct psychological states namely; perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness (Joiner, 2005, and Hingra, Debrowska Boduszek & Ali, 2016).

Osafo (2016) and Boldt (1988) thinks that suicide behaviour in social culturally constructed. Osafo (2016) continues by stating that in China, women commit suicide as a sort of protestation against patriarchal oppression. In all these, there are manifestations and this can be in terms of depression low self-esteem, hopelessness… (Totoro,Toffol and Scocco, 2016). This is supported by Fata, Yusuf, Kamal and Namaziandost (2021) when they assert that the desire to live no longer due to the afore mentioned factors, could lead persons to end their own lives. Most often, persons who leaves suicide notes metaphorically show signs of hopelessness. Worldwide, suicide notes are acclaimed to be the best way to read into the mind of those who committed suicide or those who attempted suicide.

Thus, Karbeyaz, Akkaya, Balc and Urazel (2014), observe that, suicide notes are one of the elements reflecting the psychological situation of persons. In addition, these notes are among the most important evidence enlightening the forensic process and the person's approach to suicide. Indeed, this is a more concrete way of reading the mind of the writers prior to their exit,

but some do not leave any note, as such the need to look back on their interaction with the people before the actual act was committed becomes necessary, as this can also be regarded an un-written notes.

B.   Empirical Review

Suicide, suicide notes and suicidology in general have been researched by scholars in various fields. As such a lot of researches have beamed their satellite on these concepts. One of the researches, captioned, "fearlessness about death and perceived capacity to die by suicide in seventh, eighth, and ninth graders" was conducted by Teismann, Plap, Prinz and Cwik (2006). The study adopted the interpersonal theory which postulates that, for a serious suicide attempt or a suicide, one has to possess a desire to die and the capability to die by suicide. The capacity is acquired over time by repeated experiences through painful and provocative events". The main objective of the study was to appraise in a linear mode/trends the two facets of acquired capacity to end one's life-fearlessness about death and perceived capacity to kill oneself.

The findings of the study indicate that ''a linear increase in fearlessness about death was demonstrated. Gender differences were found to play a critical role, as there are profound gender differences with boys showing a linear increase in perceived capacity for suicide but not in fearlessness about death. Also girls demonstrated an age-related increase in suicide ideation/behaviour as well as painful and provocative events, but boys showed a linear increase only in non-suicidal self injury. The study concludes that since suicidal behaviour is a major concern in children and adolescents, it is important to understand the phenomenon of acquired capacity for suicide in the age group, as this will play a crucial role in assisting those concern.

Another study was conducted by Chavez Hernandez, Leenaars, Chavez-de and Leenaars (2009), with the title,'' Suicide notes from Mexico and the United States: A thematic analysis''. The main objective of the study was to investigate/examine suicide notes drawn from Mexico and the United States. It is explained that though the two countries share boundaries, their cultures and suicide notes differ.
A total of 102 suicide notes were collected from both sexes in the two countries. They were collected and analysed based on a thematic model of suicide developed by Leenaars (2004). The result of the study indicates that there is considerable evidence of both intra-psychical and interpersonal correlates of suicide. Also, there seem to be more commonalities among suicide notes from the two countries despite their cultural differences.

The study thus affirms that "suicidal mind, is suicidal mind no matter the country". The study however reveals that unlike other countries, Mexicans unlike the United States and other countries of the world do not see suicide as a means of escape and this according to the study is a call for further study.
Next is the study conducted by Gvion and Apter (2014) with the title "suicide and suicide behaviour". The study affirms that suicide is a major health problem and for decades a leading curse of death in Western world. The main objectives of the study were to x-ray the latest developments in the researches and knowledge of suicide behavior and death. The way and manner the research was conducted was not overly stated, but the study seems to be a documentary research

The findings of the study indicate that 90% of suicide cases met criteria for a psychiatric disorder, particularly; depression, substance use disorders, personality disorder and schizophrenia. The findings also show that, Psychopathologies/mood disorder, aggression, loneliness, alienation and communication difficulties were the various forms of suicidal behaviours which manifested in the candidates/culprits. The study went ahead to state that though a review of the recent developments in the treatment of suicide behaviour was not the concern of the study, it however observed that traditional therapies such as psychoanalytic oriented psychotherapy and the use of Cognitive - Behavioural Therapy for suicide prevention (CBT - SP) should be used for suicide attempters.

The next research on suicide is on topic, "thought process and discourse strategies in selected suicide notes in online media" and this was conducted by Osogu (2022). The study states that suicide is a criminal offence in Nigeria and there is no justification for committing or attempting to commit suicide in the eyes of the Nigeria law. As the study suggests, very little have been done in the area if linguistic features in suicide note. The main objective of the study was to identify relevant facts of linguistic features in discourses represented in suicide notes.

The data used in the study were collected from online media, namely, newspapers, Facebook and Instagram, between 2017 and 2020. A total of 38 suicide cases and notes were examined with emphasis on what led to the act. The study adopted the Thora Tenbrink's Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) model. The finding of the study indicates, that six of the patients died through the ingesting of poisonous substances, while one hanged himself. Also the study found out that the suicide notes examined lacked powerful thought process and or cogent reasons for taking such a deadly action. The study concludes that, from extracts from most of the notes, the writers must have suffered depression, and in their opinion seemed justified, in committing the act.

C. Theoretical Framework

This research endeavour adopts Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT). This theory as put forward by Aaron Beck (1976), hypothesised that depression symptoms arise from negative views of the self (e.g. as worthless and a burden), the world (e.g. overwhelmed by stressors) and the future (e.g. hopelessness) known as the cognitive triad. Few other theory can capture suicide, suicide behaviour and suicidology better than this theory.

Continuing Beck (1995) as emphasized by Rabon, Hirch and Chang (2018) state that cognitive behavioural theory also suggest that the way a person thinks, feels and behaves all influence one another. Explaining this further, they opine that in the context of suicidal behaviour, for example, thought of being "better off dead" may result in the feelings of depression and hopelessness and in turn to engagement in behaviours such as self-injury or a suicide attempt. This if not dictated on time may lead to suicide.

This behaviour may manifest in several ways which may include certain utterances, behaviours and some un-usual/abnormal behaviours. When such unusual behaviours occur, the use of CBT becomes necessary. In the views of Alavi, Sharifi Ghanizadeh, and Dehbozorgi

(2013), and Stanley, et al. (2009), behavioural therapy has been successfully utilised to reduce suicide risk in adult and adolescent population.

Still on this theory, Fenn and Bryne (2024) observe that CBT is based on the cognitive model of mental illness which was initially developed by Beck (1964) and can be simply summarize on the fact that people's emotions and behavior can aid in preempting their actions. They went further to assert that CBT aims at teaching patients to be their own therapist by helping them understand their current ways of thinking and behaving and also by equipping them with necessary tools to change their maladaptive cognitive and behavioural patterns.

CBT is a problem solving theory and aims at establishing collaborative therapeutic relationship in which the therapist and patient work together as a team to identify maladaptive cognitions and behaviours (Fenn and Poryne, 2024). The student is thus helped not only to identify the maladaptive behaviours/stress factors, but also to manage and refrain from such behaviours. Cognitive behaviour theory and the therapeutic aspect are important in this study, as it can help the therapist gain knowledge of the patient, and also aid the patient to understand himself and thus be able to handle his own problems.

In above studies/reviews, none focused on assessing what goes on in the mind and or the psycholinguistic angle of the utterances voiced or written in the suicide notes and this in the thrust of the present study.

5. Methodology

The study is partly a documentary and a survey research. Thus, it blends information generated from these two sources to arrive at conclusions. It also made use of purposive sampling, to select five different clusters that were use in this research.

At the second stage, accidental sampling which in still an aspect of purposive sampling was used to select five respondents in each of the clusters(within Nsukka and Owerri metropolis), on whom the instruments of data collection which were the interview and the questionnaire were administered. Thus, a total of twenty five (25) respondents were sampled for this study.

Textual analysis and descriptive analysis were used in data analysis. While textual analysis were used in the analysis of data collected via documentary research and the interviews, percentages and the mean were used in analysis of data collected through the questionnaire. In relation to the analysis and interpretation of data collected through the questionnaire, all scores below the criterion mean - C $\bar{x}$ – 2.50 are rejected, while all scores form $\bar{x}$ – 2.50 and above are accepted.

6. Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussions

The act of committing Suicide, though, may superficially resemble an accident, but in the real sense is a well thought out idea/plan, with different execution plans. Thus most often, suicide are pre-meditated and may be visible in utterances and behaviours. In the presentation

and analysis below, behaviours, actions and in-actions, utterances and suicide notes were focused on and analysed in line with the research questions.

A. **Behavioural/Contextual Cues That Precede Suicide**

Language can project various meanings, be it positive or negative connotations (Manan, Sagrisal& Fedhileh, 2019, Sumarit, Sahayu & Triyono, 2020) and at times a gap between what is intended and what is said (Abonyi, 2013). More importantly however, actions and in-actions may even predict or be a precursor that may suggest the intent to commit suicide. The response as seen in the table below is an attestation/a testimonial to this stand.

Table 1:

A   Behavioural/Contextual Cues that Suggest Intent to Commit Suicide

S/No.	Items	Options								$\bar{x}$	Decision
		SA	(4)	A	(3)	D	(2)	SD	(1)		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	Depression	10	40%	7	28%	3	12 %	5	20%	2.88	**Accepted**
2	Aggression on self	4	16%	5	20%	4	16%	12	48%	**2. 04**	**Rejected**
3	Aggression on others	7	28%	1	40%	4	16%	13	52%	2.08	**Rejected**
4	Appreciation	12	48%	6	24%	3	12 %	4	16 %	**3. 04**	**Accepted**
5	Use of Figurative expressions	2	8%	7	28%	4	16%	12	48%	1.96	**Rejected**
6	Impulsivity	10	40%	7	28%	5	20%	3	12%	2.96	**Accepted**
7	Absent Mindedness	9	36%	8	32%	3.12%		5	20%	2.84	**Accepted**
8	Hallucination	8	32%	7	28%	5	20%	5	20%	2.72	**Accepted**
9	Mood Swing	8	32 %	8	32%	5	20%	4.	16%	2.80	**Accepted**
Average Mean – (AVG - $\bar{X}$)										**2. 59**	**Accepted**

The fact that Suicide is not an act that results from accident is reflected in the reactions of respondents in the table above. Here, the average mean is- AVG $\bar{x}$ – 2.59, suggesting that most of the items in the table secured positive responses. In the table above, while, depression receive $\bar{x}$= 2.88 with 68% of respondents affirming that depression is a major manifestation and a precursor to suicide, the show of appreciation and impulsiveness received the mean scores of $\bar{x}$ - 3.04 and $\bar{x}$ -2.96 respectively, representing 72% and 68% of respondents. Also, "absent-mindedness, hallucinations and mood swing" received the mean scores of $\bar{x}$ -2.84, $\bar{x}$-2.72 and $\bar{x}$-

2.80 respectively, thus supporting the existence of these behaviours as a prelude to the actual act. However, " aggression either on self or on others and the use of figurative expressions received negative scores ($\bar{x}$-2.04, 2.08, and 1.96) and thus support the fact that these behaviours were not seen in persons who attempted or committed suicide.

Corroborating above result, Ugwueze (2024) observe that most of these actions and In-actions which are prelude to suicide may never manifest in these individuals despite the context or environment. According to Ugwueze, relatives and friends of people who committed suicide only remember the manifestation of these behaviours only when the act has been committed. Machu (2024) however opine that a change of behaviour can be noticed by someone who is down to earth and once this is noticed, no matter how minute, such should not be taken for granted.

Table 2:

B. Linguistic features/Devices in Suicide Notes

S/No.	Items	SA (4)		A (3)		D (2)		SD (1)		$\bar{X}$	Decision
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
10.	Grammaticality	4	16%	7	28%	1	4%	13	52%	2.08	Rejected
12	Appropriateness of Punctuation	3	12%	6	24%	7	28%	9	36%	2.00	Rejected
13	Repetitive words/Utterances	9	36%	5	20%	6	24%	5	20%	2.72	Accepted
14..	Usual Hand Writing	5	20%	6	24%	4	16%	10	40%	1.84	Rejected
15.	Vagueness	11	44%	7	28%	3	12%	4	16%	3.00	Accepted
16.	Use of Active Verbs	7	28%	9	36%	4	16%	5	20%	2.72	Accepted
17.	Use of Adjectives	5	20%	6	24%	4	16%	10	40%	2.24	Rejected
18	Use of Adverbs	10	40%	6	24%	5	20%	4	16%	2.88	Accepted
19	Less lexical Diversity	5	20%	3	12%	7	28%	10	40%	2.12	Rejected
20	Logical Write-ups	2	8%	4	16%	13	52%	6	24%	2.08	Rejected
21.	Naming	11	44%	3	12%	6	24%	5	20%	2.80	Accepted
AVG- $\bar{X}$										2.41	Rejected

Language be it at comprehension level or at the execution level, is the function of the brain and suicide being a psychiatric health issue, definitely affect the brain. In the table above, most of the items received negative mean scores, thus this table has a cumulative average mean of $\bar{x}$- 2 41. The first and second items "grammaticality" and "appropriateness of punctuations" received $\bar{x}$- 2.08 and $\bar{x}$- 2.00 respectively. This suggests that suicide notes were not only properly dotted and ungrammatical but also lacked correct punctuations. Their handwritings were also affected negatively ($\bar{x}$- 1.84). Thus, while "grammaticality" and "appropriateness of punctuations "received 64% and 36%, "unusual hand-writing" got 44%. These scores reflect the views of Eze

(2024), who stated that apart from the writing on the suicide note, he would have rejected the suicide note found in the brother's room, as the brother is learned and cannot have grammatical and punctuation errors as was noticed in the suicide note.

Item 15 (vagueness $\bar{x}$-3.00), 16 use of active verbs $\bar{x}$-2.72), 18 (use of adverbs $\bar{x}$-2.88) and 21 (naming $\bar{x}$-2.80) all garnered positive responses, attesting to the fact that the prepositions were seen in the suicide notes. This also suggest that there are lots of vagueness in the write-ups, but even at that, adjectives, lexical diversity and write-ups being logical were not dominant features in the suicide notes. These negative scores suggest one thing, and that is the fact that the brain and its functions have been compromised and as such cannot function maximally. The intricate relationship and or the control the brain has on language is relaxed or impaired. In a nut-shell, the write-up becomes vague and the sense of logic is lost. Just as it is not logical to take one's life, the write-ups reflect this illogicality.

This is however not in line with the views of Fata, Yusuf, Kamal and Namaziandos (2021) who state, that clear reasoning is one of the characteristic features of genuine suicide notes as this denote the common and apparent reason for a victim to end his or her life. This is echoed by the conjunction, sentence phrase and clause of "because" that data displayed in Table 2 above are also in tandem with the study carried out by

> … Suicide notes… have more repetitive words, few adjectives, few adverbs and less lexical diversity… (They) have greater disorganisation in language than ordinary notes… the suicide notes …. have more language errors shorter sentences and small word units… they usually have more simple action verbs and positive concepts.

Furthermore, though these particular table (Table 2) got a negative mean score, it should be stated herein that all the features/devices listed were available in the suicide notes used in this study but in varying degrees.

C   Themes in Suicide Notes

Different reasons for suicide and the re-occurring themes were captured in the table below.

Table 3:

Different Themes in Suicide Notes

S/No.	Items	Options								$\bar{X}$	Decision
		SA	(4)	A	(3)	D	(2)	SD	(1)		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
22.	Mental Pain	12	8 %	7	28 %	3	12%	3	12%	**3.12**	**Accepted**
23.	Physical Pain	9	36%	7	28 %	5	20 %	4	16%	**2.84**	**Accepted**
24.	Hopelessness/Frustration	16	64%	5	20 %	1	4%	3	12%	**3.76**	**Accepted**
25.	Learning	11	44%	6	24%	5	20 %	3	12%	**3.00**	**Accepted**

	Difficulties/failures										
26.	Unresolved Problems	10	40%	7	28 %	3	12%	5	20 %	**2.88**	**Accepted**
27.	Self Pity	6	24%	5	20 %	4	16%	10	40%	**2.20**	**Accepted**
28.	Feeling for the Family members	16	64%	6	24 %	5	20 %	3	12%	**3.00**	**Accepted**
29.	Aggression on Self	13	2 %	7	28 %	2	8%	3	12%	**3.20**	**Accepted**
30.	Aggression on Others	7	28 %	2	8%	3	12%	13	52 %	**2.12**	**Rejected**
31.	Appreciation	8	32%	9	36%	2	8%	6	24 %	**2.76**	**Accepted**
32.	Fearlessness	4	16%	5	20 %	11	44%	5	20 %	**2.32**	**Rejected**
33.	Prayers	3	12%	7	28 %	5	20 %	10	40%	**2.12**	**Rejected**
34.	Mercy (From God)	2	8%	9	36%	3	12%	11	44%	**2.08**	**Rejected**
AVG- $\bar{X}$										**2.72**	**Accepted**

Majority of the propositions/items contained in this table receive positive scores resulting in an average mean of $\bar{x}$- 2.72. As can be seen in table above also, majority of the respondents agree that "mental pain (86%), physical pain (64%), hopelessness /frustration (84%) and learning difficulties (68%) were the main themes noticed in suicide notes. Furthermore, items 26 (un-resolved problems), feelings for family members, aggression on oneself and appreciation were the main themes noticed in suicide notes. Appreciation also got a high score with 68% of the respondents attesting that there are evidences of appreciation on the suicide notes. This was corroborated by Eze (2024) who stated that most often those who committed suicide appreciated family members and others who aided them in their time of need.

On the other side items 27 (self pity), 30 (aggression to others), 32 (fearfulness), 33 (prayers) and 34 (mercy- from God) received, 44% 36% , 36% 40% and 47% respectively, attesting to the fact that those who commit suicide neither have self pity nor have fear in them, and these made it possible for them to have the gut to harm themselves (40%). These also made them not to have any reason to pray or ask for God's mercy.

7.   Discussions of Findings

At this juncture based on data displayed and analysed, it can be stated that suicide, is a pre-meditated, nurtured and sometimes may manifest in actions, and inactions before the actual execution. Depression, un-usual appreciation, impulsivity, absent mindedness, hallucination and mode swing were all adjudged to be precursors and a prelude to suicide. Other items still received appreciable response from the respondents as such they are not absent in the behaviours of those that either attempted or committed suicide.

It should be observed that aggression to self received "negative response as a behaviour that precedes suicide, however, it recorded positive response as one of the themes in suicide notes. This is understandable because at the initial stage, the culprits have not made up their mind to committee suicide, however, at the stage of writing the suicide note, their mind were made up as it is even alleged that some do write with blood (Eze, 2024).

On language features/devices in suicide notes, the data demonstrate that most of the prepositions contained in Table 2 are present in suicide notes. Here performance and execution are affected because the brain has also been affected. The language ability of those who committed suicide were affected negatively before the actual act, as the brain was already compromised. These were reflected in the themes seen in suicide notes. Supporting the fact that these themes abound in suicide notes. Orbach (1994) as reported in Fata, Yusuf, Kamal, and Namaziandost (2021,p. 722),

> Identified physical pain as the cause of a 59-year old married female who committed suicide,… in which she wrote: after six weeks of streptomycin shots, we have conclusive proof that the ulcer's in my bronchial tubes have not healed. I can't bleed my family for any such amount of money.

Fata and the co-researchers thus conclude that, this conveyed that physical pain and mental pain can affect victims to perform this act of self destruction.

From the light of the fore-going, it could be adduced that, understanding the behaviours of those who are on the road to self destruction are effective ways of detecting and preventing suicide. This is where his application of Cognitive Behaviour Theory becomes necessary. Knowing the cognitive trait really help the therapist or those around to render help to those who think that, they are "better off dead". Thus as the unusual behaviours and actions occur, the use of CBT becomes necessary as this can be effectively utilised to reduce suicide. As stated earlier, one of the basic termed of CBT is the ability to teach and inculcate on the patient to be his or her own therapist. This model equips them with tools needed in changing their maladaptive cognitive and behavioural patterns and thus re-direct them away from negative thoughts.

8. Conclusion

There is no known culture/civilisation where suicide is celebrated or regarded as a heroic act, rather, it is regarded as a crime or an abomination in most cultures. Suicide is a mental health issue and claim not less than one million people every year worldwide (Teismann, Plap, Pruiz and Cwck, 2016). Since it is a mental health issue, knowing the behavioural traits/signs and employing the right therapies should be the right strategy to cub the rising number of people committing suicide not just among the Igbo people of Nigeria (either at home or the diasporas) but globally.

Suicide is not restricted to any part of the world, neither is it restricted to a particular group of people. Among the Igbo people, suicide cases are reported within Igbo land and even among those in diasporas. However, knowing the risk-factors and eliminating them may just be the only way out of it. Also reverting to our communal life where everybody is a brother's keeper will not only help in detecting people who are depressed, withdrawn and others with deviant behaviours, that may trigger in their the urge to committee suicide but could also help in ameliorating the pains and thus reversing the trend.

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