

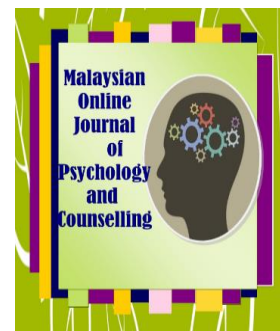
## FACTORS INFLUENCING SUICIDAL TENDENCIES AMONG YOUTH AS EXPRESSED BY STUDENTS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study focused on factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youth as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos metropolis. Survey design was adopted while a total of 250 respondents were randomly selected for the study. A self-designed questionnaire entitled “Factors Influencing Suicide” was employed to gather data for the study. A reliability coefficient of .78 was obtained. Mean and t-test statistical tools were used to analyse the data. One research question and four null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level. Results revealed that depressive symptoms from situations of abandonment by loved ones during health or other crises, financial incapacities, academic failures, getting jilted by trusted partners constituted major factors influencing suicide among youth. Results revealed no significant difference in students’ responses except for age. Study recommended that students should be adequately monitored and given comprehensive guidance and counselling by counselling practitioners in order to be properly informed about life and how serious issues are carefully handled.

**Keywords:** *Suicide, Tendencies, Ideation, Young Adults, Tertiary Institutions*



**Volume 9 (1),  
June 2022**

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## INTRODUCTION

Suicide or suicide ideation in contemporary times has become a source of concern to practitioners in the public mental health sector as well as field of counselling, as it poses serious challenges to young adults at the post- secondary school or tertiary level of education. It tends to increase among young adults, especially as they transit from adolescence to adulthood. It is fast becoming commonplace almost daily among youngsters in Nigerian tertiary institutions. A study carried out by Okoedion and Okolie (2019) reported that this incidence account for a third prominent reason why there has been continuous rise in the loss of lives among young adults between ages 15 through 45 years, as well as adolescents of school age, particularly those within the age bracket 15–19 years. The authors further reported that the menace of suicide ideation constitutes serious social risk factor in Nigeria, west Africa and the entire globe.

A look at some reported incidences of attempted suicides from certain tertiary health institutions also revealed that the problem of suicidal ideation experienced a statistical rise just within a decade, spanning through years 2009 and 2018, during which the average crude suicidal attempt rate was 10-25 per 100,000 persons. The commonest age group was among teenagers whose ages ranged between 15-19 years (43%), while almost every nine out of ten attempters (76.8%) were aged between 30 years and below. The most important predisposing factors reported were depression and mental illness (37%), sexual violence (31%) and unemployment and poverty (22%). These and many other reports have spurred the World Health Organization (WHO) to become vigorously involved in the series of global campaigns to bring the public health burden and impact of suicide to the attention of governments at all levels as well as their educational institutions, policy makers and the general public through the collation and dissemination of statistics, as well as the development of preventive programmes in the Nigeria setting. Nevertheless, the rate of youth engagements in suicidal practices is on the increase by the day (Okoedion & Okolie, 2019). Thus, suicidal attempts have considerably increased in recent years particularly among teens, adolescents and other young adults alike (Omigbodun et al., 2008; Engin et al., 2009). However, as serious as this menace is, not much has been done in literature on the noticeable geometric rise in prevalence, screening as well as correlates of suicidal behaviours especially among students of tertiary institutions in the Nigerian setting, and on the African continent as a whole (Aloba et al., 2017).

An act is said to be suicidal when it involves a process ranging from thinking about carrying out the act of suicide to death wishes. This also involved an uncontrolled attempt towards ending one's life and those of other innocent individuals. This act has been on for decades, whereas, accurately predicting which individuals would move from suicidal thoughts to carrying it out leading to death is poorly understood (Engin et al., 2009; Igwe et al., 2013). Suicide is an intentional killing of oneself as a kind of action or a social phenomenon, at some other instances, it involves killing of other individuals in the process. In most cases, it is a thought-out act that is deliberately premeditated (Birt et al., 2003). Suicidal attempts have been widely reported among older generations particularly when the breadwinner of a home found it difficult to satisfy the needs of the family or got disengaged from his/her job.

It is thus surprising that in the current dispensation, many of the victims of suicide attempts have been students or other youth who decided to end it due to academic problems, carryovers in courses at mid as well as final year levels, disappointment by someone's partner in a love relationship, among other causal factors (Osafo et al., 2013). Suicide occupies a prominent place in the ranking/listing of incidences of mortality, notably in the world of university undergraduates, particularly in the

community of civilized nations across the globe. However, it still appears that research have not succintly established any reliable and well thought-out plan of action geared towards deliberately listing and carefully responding to university undergraduates, as well as others in post-secondary institutions/colleges who may be susceptible to suicidal ideation or any other related behaviours being exhibited by those in the various tertiary institutions in particular (Aloba et al., 2017).

Furthermore, suicidal attempts could occur after certain persons experience an unpleasant situation such as rape. This is as Adebayo & Tajudin (2019) affirmed that incidences of rape could lead victims to attempt suicide so as to overcome the depressive symptoms, psychological, and emotional trauma associated with the ugly incident. In other words, some students, particularly female undergraduates resort to suicide ideation when they are forced to have sexual relationships with lecturers or their male colleagues against their own wishes. This usually occurs when such an individual turns down sexual advances from either male lecturers or co-students. This is a typical case of sexual violence against teens, adolescents or youth as the case may be. Closely related to sexual violation is breakup experienced in romantic relationships by either partner. The latter has more reported cases of suicidal attempts than the former in the contemporary Nigerian society (Okoedion & Okolie 2019; Osafo et al., 2013).

Also, continuous shifts in acceptable societal norms, values, traditions and customs to one of globalization, modernization or civilization, as well as rural-urban drifts largely create tensions and urge for unnecessary competitions in young people (Engin et al., 2009). As such, youngsters often get depressed the moment some of their set goals are not easily achieved. In order to avoid embarrassments due to their feeling of inadequacies, disappointments or inability to meet the expectations of the society from them, they opt for suicidal ideation (Osafo et al., 2013).

Albert Ellis developed the theory of Rational Emotive therapy (REBT), in which he believes that the beginning of unhappiness or emotional disturbances in man emanates from individual's belief systems. The theory explains that man is born with the potential to be rational and irrational in their thought patterns. Most psychological neurotic behaviours occur as a result of irrational and illogical thoughts that an individual has about themselves, and this ultimately drops down their self-concept or develops in them a low self-esteem. REBT believes that all emotional problems stem from un-validated thinking. When these irrational thoughts cannot be handled by clients, they attempt suicide.

Further, from a religious perspective, Eskin (2004) concluded that individuals who are positively inclined to religious tenets, beliefs and doctrines hardly succumbed to suicidal thoughts and pressures because other congregants rallied around such individuals to help in situations of distress; this assertion was equally corroborated by Osafo et al., (2013) from a religious perspective in terms of the teachings of the various religions. However, it is noteworthy that in the current dispensation, different individuals and young adults carry out suicidal acts regardless of their religious affiliations. Worse still, religious leaders and preachers are also reportedly committing suicide in recent times. It is therefore not surprising that the younger generation continues the trend when situations that appear too tasking confronts them in the face, and rather than seek healthy counsels, they sometimes often prefer to keep to themselves until the point of giving suicide an attempt.

In another instance, Ojedokun (2011) asserts that practitioners in the helping professions in the areas of psychological counselling and mental health well-being could also assist to improve or aid distressed students' or individuals' interest in seeking help through psychological counselling, which could ultimately lead to positive changes in their attitudes towards life as a whole, seeking professional assistance when distressed or experiencing symptoms of depression, and at the long run

achieving a highly modified personality that is devoid of thoughts that are capable of breeding suicidal attempts particularly when they have situations of unmet needs, unfulfilled aspirations, performance that is below expectations or some other psychological, emotional, as well as social needs (Oladeji & Gureje, 2011). This invariably preserves the sanctity of human lives rather than cutting it short through suicidal behaviours. Instances abound of students of various tertiary institutions (Lagos State University, University of Lagos, Polytechnic students, among others) both within and outside Lagos metropolis, who were recently reported to have ended their own lives basically because of their financial plights, academic failures and relationship failures/abandonment by trusted boyfriends/girlfriends (Okoedion & Okolie 2019; Osafo et al., 2013; the Sun, Wednesday, June 12, 2019).

### ***Statement of the Problem***

The act of suicide has become more remarkably pronounced among young adults in tertiary institutions in recent times. It is an act being carried out almost daily in Nigerian societies nowadays, without any sign of care or concern on the part of government or its agencies in order to nip it in the bud. As teens carry out the act, so do young adults particularly those in tertiary institutions as well as their contemporaries serving the nation in the mandatory programme organized by the Federal Government with the sole aim of bringing every region of the country together in order to achieve greater cohesion, synergy and cooperation among the various ethnic divides or groups (i.e. the NYSC scheme). Reasons often adduced for the unwarranted act of ending one's life or alongside those of other innocent persons who may sometimes be significant people in the individual's life include: financial problems, academic failures, marital unfaithfulness, abandonment by loved ones, rejection by friends or members of the opposite gender whom one showed great affection for but got turned down ultimately, among other reasons.

Moreover, regardless of the cause of the depressive symptoms that often result into suicidal attempts, taking of life, either of an individual's or significant persons which has taken centre stage in the minds of some young people the moment their dreams, aspirations or desires are delayed or seems unmet/unsatisfied, ending one's life does not actually provide the solution to whatever the challenges being confronted. This is because suicide ideation poses a great danger to the younger generation, and this requires more awakening on the part of counselling practitioners and other personnel in the helping profession. The counsellor would promptly provide adequate counselling and mental health interventions so as to prevent its spread among the populace, particularly students of tertiary institutions, majority of whom constitute the bulk of the actors of suicidal activities at the wake of life disappointment, cases of abandonment, inadequacies, provocations or inability to attain a feat in life. It is so serious that different individuals are advocating that incidences of suicides should not be reported henceforth in order to block the spread of its reportage amidst students who might assume it is an appropriate alternative to the various challenges of life especially in tertiary institutions (Aloba et al., 2017).

There has been dearth of research focus on this particular issue in the Nigerian settings, probably because it is relatively new to its culture (Aloba et al., 2017). However, few studies have been carried out in relation to suicidal behaviours in the Southwest zone of the country. Omigbodun et al., (2008) study focused on the prevalence and correlates of suicidal behaviour among adolescents in Southwest Nigeria and found that a good proportion of the sampled teens affirmed that they had previously tried to terminate their own lives. Furthermore, these set of researchers postulated that youngsters who live in big cities, their contemporaries who hailed from homes with multiple wives,

those from already separated/divorced parents tend to have greater possibility for suicidal ideation/tendencies. Multiple psychological, emotional and social factors such as sexual abuse, physical attack and involvement in physical fights were significant predictors of suicidal behaviours amongst adolescents. The authors concluded that causal factors associated with suicidal ideation and behaviours of adolescents in the Southwest Nigeria are similar to those found in other studies but the rates of both suicidal ideation and attempts are towards the upper limit of rates for youth, hence, the study suggested that there was the urgent need for Nigerian policymakers and health providers to review and address the menace. However, until now, no policy had been reviewed nor raised to stop this issue which portends great danger to the Nation, especially its young ones.

Also, Oladeji and Gureje (2011) carried out a study to find out whether an individual's parental mental conditions had bearings on the children's probable suicidal behaviour in Nigeria, West Africa. WHO's Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI-3), version 3 was used by the researchers to assess respondents' suicidal behaviours as well as psychopathology in their parents. The researchers found that parental panic disorder and substance abuse were associated with suicide ideation in their children, but only parental panic disorder was linked acts of suicide or suicidal attempts. According to the authors, parental panic disorder predicted the onset and persistence of suicide ideation and attempts, which persons with suicidal ideation go ahead to commit against himself/herself.

Furthermore, Igwe et al., (2013) examined related causes of depressive symptoms and suicidal ideation amongst those who were diabetic and those who had symptoms of blood pressure (hypertensive patients) in a tertiary health institution in Eastern Nigeria, and findings revealed that prevalence of depression amongst sampled subjects who also had higher tendencies for suicide whereas, those with symptoms of hypertension did not exhibit such. In essence, feelings of depression were more pronounced in respondents with diabetes if they were not married or had no education while the samples with just symptoms of hypertension were more likely to have depression if they were not married, had no education or not employed. Tendencies for suicide tend to be higher in samples with the disease of DM if they had no education while in essential hypertension suicidal behaviour was higher in females, those not married and those not educated. Arising from the aforementioned studies and the gaps in literature, this study therefore sought to investigate the causal factors influencing suicide attempts amongst young people as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria.

### ***Objective of the Study***

The main objective of this study was to find out the factors that influence suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of higher educational institutions in Lagos State, South-west, Nigeria. It was aimed at advancing useful recommendations that may serve as effective counselling intervention plans towards preventing further incidences of suicide attempts that seem to have become commonplace in the Nigerian youth culture particularly, when certain goals are not achieved or needs met.

### ***Research Question***

What factors influence suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institution in Lagos State, Nigeria?

## **Research Hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested in the course of this study:

1. There is no significant difference in the views of male and female students of tertiary institutions in Lagos state on the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths.
2. There is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria based on course of study.
3. There is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria based on age group.
4. There is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria based on type of institution.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This is a quantitative study and it adopted descriptive survey method. The researcher used a self-designed questionnaire to collect data from selected respondents. The population for the study were students of tertiary institutions, both public and privately owned in Lagos State. Random sampling technique was used to select 250 students from universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and nursing in Lagos East, west and central senatorial districts. The selection was random comprising students in the selected tertiary institutions. The questionnaire used was entitled "Factors Influencing Suicide Questionnaire (FISQ)". It was developed by the researchers in order to give careful consideration to the peculiarities and cultural practices of the people in the research area (Lagos, Nigeria). It consisted of two sections (A & B); while section A contained the demographic details of respondents, section B contained 20 items on probable factors influencing suicide attempts among students of tertiary institutions. The instrument was patterned along a Four-point Likert scale format on a 4-1 scoring continuum. The instrument was subjected to the Cronbach's alpha method of reliability which yielded a coefficient of .78, which was considered reliable for use in the study. The instrument was also validated by three other experts in the field of counselling and mental health. The researchers secured the consents of the respondents and only administered the instrument on those that agreed to take part in the study. Thus, participation was voluntary, having obtained permission from appropriate authorities in each tertiary institution. Participants were randomly selected. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The demographic data were analysed using percentage, while independent samples t-test statistical tool was used to test the four null hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

## **RESULTS**

### **Demographic Data**

Table 1  
*Summary of Respondents' Demographic Profile*

Type	N	Factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		Male	84	33.6
		Female	166	66.4
Course of Study		Science based	63	25.2

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	250	Social Sciences	124	49.6
		Humanities based	40	16.0
		Engineering based	23	9.2
Age		15-20 years	96	38.4
		21-25 years	105	42.0
		26-30 years	31	12.4
		Above 30 years	18	7.2
Type of Institution		University	134	53.6
		Polytechnic	82	32.8
	Colleges of Education/Nursing	34	13.6	

The results of the demographic profile presented in Table 1 revealed that (N=84) 33.6% of the respondents were males while (N=166) 66.4% were females. The Table also revealed that (N=63) 25.2% of the respondents were in science based programmes, while N=124 (49.6%) were in the social science based courses; N=40 (16.0%) were humanities based, and N=23 (9.2%) were in technology or engineering related programmes. The Table further indicated that (N=96) 38.4% of the participants were in the age bracket 15-20 years, while (N=105) 42.0% were in the age range of 21-25 years, whereas, (N=31) 12.4% fell within 26-30 years and (N=18) 7.2% of the respondents were above 30 years. Furthermore, the Table showed that university students constituted 53.6% (N=134) of the respondents, while polytechnic students were 32.8% (N=82), and colleges of education and nursing colleges constituted 13.6% (N=34) of the total respondents that partook in the exercise.

**Research Question:** What are the factors influencing suicide ideation among youth as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 2

*Mean and Rank Order of Respondents' Expressions on Factors Influencing Suicidal Tendencies among Youth*

S/No	As far as I am concerned, suicidal tendencies are influenced by:	Mean	Rank
20	unsatisfactory/failed love relationships	3.96	1 <sup>st</sup>
18	unrealistic societal expectation from young adults	3.74	2 <sup>nd</sup>
17	skyrocketed cases of unemployment leading to defeatist tendencies	3.74	2 <sup>nd</sup>
10	academic failure	3.67	4 <sup>th</sup>
19	unnecessary comparison to one's contemporaries by parents/society	3.67	4 <sup>th</sup>
11	ailments defiling medical interventions	3.59	6 <sup>th</sup>
9	isolating victims when passing through life difficulties	3.54	7 <sup>th</sup>
12	incidences of rape	3.53	8 <sup>th</sup>
1	unmet needs	3.49	9 <sup>th</sup>
2	financial inadequacies	3.47	10 <sup>th</sup>
3	rejection by loved ones	3.46	11 <sup>th</sup>
5	unattended depressive symptoms	3.40	12 <sup>th</sup>
4	abandonment by trusted ones when in dire need of help/supports	3.38	13 <sup>th</sup>
8	unwarranted stereotyping of people's problems	3.37	14 <sup>th</sup>
14	making unnecessary mockery of victims	3.37	14 <sup>th</sup>

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13	online assaults suffered by victims	3.35	16 <sup>th</sup>
6	free/unrestricted accesses to sniper insecticide fluids	3.27	17 <sup>th</sup>
15	uncontrolled heightened emotions	3.26	18 <sup>th</sup>
16	parental separation	3.21	19 <sup>th</sup>
7	deliberate refusal to attend to peoples' needs on time	3.20	20 <sup>th</sup>

The results in Table 2 revealed that unsatisfactory/failed love relationships ranked 1st in the list of factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youth as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria. Therefore, this provides answer to the research question raised. Essentially, unrealistic societal expectations from young adults, skyrocketed cases of unemployment leading to defeatist tendencies, academic failure, as well as unnecessary comparison to one's contemporaries by parents or society ranked 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively. It is also interesting to note that that all other items had mean scores above 3.20. In other words, all the items had very strong mean scores, thus, they are the core factors aiding suicidal attempts among youth as expressed by students of various tertiary institutions in Lagos metropolis, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the views of male and female students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria on factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths.

Table 3

*Results of Independent samples t-test on the basis of Gender*

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-val	Crit. t-val	p-val
Male	84	70.2857	3.53152	248	1.811	1.96	0.465
Female	166	69.3614	3.94532				

\*Significant;  $p > 0.05$

The results of the independent samples t-test in Table 3 indicated that the t-value (1.811) was less than the t-statistics (1.96). Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youth as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on gender was accepted;  $t(df = 248) = 1.811, p > 0.05$ .

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on course of study.

Table 4

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results Showing Students' Views based on Course of Study*

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Cal. f-ratio	Crit. f-ratio	Sig.
Between Groups	67.008	3	22.336			
Within Groups	3584.096	246	14.569	1.533	2.60	0.206
Total	3651.104	249				

\*Significant;  $p > 0.05$

The results in Table 4 showed that the F-ratio of 1.533 was obtained, while the critical F-ratio was 2.60, whereas, the p-value (0.206) was greater than 0.05. Since the calculated F-ratio was less than



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the critical f-ratio, and the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youth as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on course of study was accepted,  $F (df=3, 246) = 1.533, p > 0.05$ .

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on age.

Table 5

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results Showing Students' Views based on Age*

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Cal. f-ratio	Crit. f-ratio	Sig.
Between Groups	134.849	3	44.950			
Within Groups	3516.255	246	14.294	3.145*	2.60	0.026
Total	3651.104	249				

\*Significant;  $p < 0.05$

The results in Table 5 revealed that the F-ratio of 3.145 was obtained, while the critical F-ratio was 2.60, whereas, the p-value (0.026) was less than 0.05. Since the calculated F-ratio was greater than the critical f-ratio, and the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youth as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on age was rejected,  $F (df=3, 246) = 3.145, p < 0.05$ . In order to discover the source of the significant difference observed in the ANOVA results of Table 5, further examination of age difference was carried out using Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) as post hoc test (Table 6).

Table 6

*Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Comparing Factors Influencing Suicidal Tendencies Means of Respondents' Age Groups*

Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N	Group	Respondents' Age Groups
A	68.0645	31	3	26-30 Years
A	68.7222	18	4	Above 30 Years
B	69.7333	105	2	21-25 Years
B	70.3021	96	1	15-20 Years

The Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) results in Table 6 determined which of the chronological age group mean led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA results of Table 5. The DMRT results indicated that the mean of group 3 (68.0645) and that of group 4 (68.7222) did not differ significantly compared to those of groups 2 and 1 (i.e. 69.7333 & 70.3021 respectively), which together differed significantly from the means of groups 4 and 3. Hence, the significant difference observed in the ANOVA results of Table 5 was due to the fact that means of groups 2 and 1 significantly differed from those of groups 4 and 3.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youth as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on type of institution.

Table 7

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results Showing Students' Views based on Type of Institution*

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Cal. f-ratio	Crit. f-ratio	Sig.
Between Groups	86.728	3	28.909			
Within Groups	3564.376	246	14.489	1.995	2.60	0.115
Total	3651.104	249				

\*Significant;  $p > 0.05$

The results in Table 7 indicated that the F-ratio of 1.995 was obtained, while the critical f-ratio was 2.60, whereas, the p-value (0.115) was greater than 0.05. Since the calculated f-ratio was less than the critical f-ratio, and the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youth as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on type of institution was accepted,  $F(df=3, 246) = 1.995, p > 0.05$ .

## DISCUSSION

The outcomes of the current research activity revealed that the major factors of immense significance to suicidal tendencies among youth include failed love affairs/relationships, unrealistic societal expectations from young adults by the older generations/parents, joblessness or incidences of job loss resulting to defeatist tendencies, parent's or society's attitude of comparing their children with their contemporaries outside the home, academic failure, stubborn health challenges, financial inadequacies, incidences of rape, inability to satisfy one's needs, rejection, isolation and abandonment by loved and trusted ones, unconcerned attitudes towards depressive symptoms, among other pertinent factors. This is as several incidences of suicidal attempts, threats and acts have been staged by young adults in recent times in the wake of the Covid-19 global health challenge that has led to many experiencing job losses and inability to meet daily needs coupled with pressures from their dependents.

The findings of this study corroborate the study carried out by Adebayo & Tajudin (2019) in which the researchers found that victims of rape or forceful sexual harassments sometimes resort to suicide attempts. Also, this finding supports the study of Aloba et al., (2017) and Osafo et al., (2013) which reported that disappointment by someone with whom one shared love relationships as well inability to satisfy essential needs of life could result to suicidal ideation, particularly amongst students. It also lends credence to the findings of Ojedokun (2011) and Oladeji & Gureje (2011) in which the researchers affirmed that teens and adolescents require psychological counselling intervention in order to prevent suicidal occurrences, especially when they undergo depressive situations.

The findings also support the study of Engin et al., (2009) which found that victims of suicides often carry out the act to avoid certain embarrassments that may be experienced as a result of an ugly occurrence. Further, Eskin (2004) had also found that a distant departure from societal norms and customs as well as religious beliefs is a major reason many commit suicides. The author implies that adherents of religious tenets often get assistance where necessary and this forestalls or prevents cases of suicides unlike these contemporary times that young adults hardly share their worries with others around them. Findings from the current study are indications that majority of the students of tertiary institutions are conversant with the factors influencing suicidal tendencies especially among youths; hence, it has become imperative to put necessary interventions in place to checkmate the

prevailing spread of suicide attempts and ultimate commission by young adults in and out of tertiary institutions in order to nip it in the bud before youngsters begin to accept it as a way out of life challenges.

Other factors of significant relevance to suicidal tendencies include unwarranted stereotype of people's problems, unrestricted accesses to snipper insecticide, online assaults suffered by victims, refusal to help victims after having knowledge of their predicaments, uncontrolled heightened emotions, making mockery of people when in problems or suffered an ugly incident, as well as parental separation/divorce. Therefore, this implies that a well-planned counselling intervention could help nip suicide attempts by youngsters in the bud before the problems overwhelm them (Ojedokun, 2011). It is in the view of the current researchers that is a carefully mapped out counselling intervention could help reduce the rate of suicide attempts amongst youngsters as well as eradicating the thoughts of it from their mind-sets.

Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on gender. In other words, both male and female students reason in same manner on the factors that aid suicide occurrences amongst youngsters; both gender agreed without differing. The finding corroborates the findings of Omigbodun et al., (2008) in which the researchers found that adolescents in the southwest Nigeria often attempted suicide ideation due to the challenges of being born into polygamous homes, divorced parents, sexual assaults (rape), or even physical attacks, regardless of their gender. Also, Igwe et al., (2013) opined that depression aids suicidal attempts amongst patients suffering depressive symptoms than diabetes regardless of whether they were male or female patients.

Furthermore, this research found that there was nothing of significance in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on course of study. This implies that regardless of the programmes being studied by the respondents, they appreciated that factors aiding widespread of suicidal attempts by youngsters in Nigerian societies alike. This outcome further supports those of previous researchers (Omigbodun et al., 2008; Engin et al., 2009) that have variously postulated that reasons ascribed to suicide attempts have remained unchanged overtime irrespective of who, where and what the situations are. Thus, the reason the present finding is not different from what others found with respect to how individuals view causal factors that influence suicidal tendencies particularly among young adults.

Moreover, there was a significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on age. A further check through the post hoc analysis revealed that the significant difference was from the divergent views between the groups 15-25 years and 26 years and above. The differing views may have been due to the experiences of the older groups which the younger group may not have had. It may also be because students within the group of 25 years and below had better knowledge of why young adults in ages below 25 years are mostly those reported as committing suicides or making suicidal attempts after being disappointed by boyfriend/girlfriend, inability to pay school fees, difficulties in academics, among other factors, than those above 30 years who may have thought that such challenges are not enough reasons for an individual to take his/her own life at will. This may also have been due to the various changes witnessed in these modern times such as: technological, scientific, socio-cultural, globalization, among others, which have resulted in many cultural practices, norms and values abolished for modern day driven lifestyles, which those within the younger group

are well accustomed to, hence, the reason they appreciated the factors influencing suicidal thoughts/attempts much more than the older students.

It was gathered that there was no significant difference in the factors influencing suicidal tendencies among youths as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on type of institution. This supports those of previous researchers (Omigbodun et al., 2008; Engin et al., 2009) which concluded that the causalities of suicide attempts have been consistently constant overtime regardless of the sets of individuals making such attempts or having its thoughts crossing their minds. Thus, students of all tertiary institutions are conversant with suicide attempts and its various propelling factors in individuals who have suffered it. The findings of this study further lend support to that of Okoedion & Okolie (2019) whose study reported that suicidal thoughts resulting from romantic break-ups differs significantly from victims of sexual violation. While in the former, the victim is more likely to develop suicidal thoughts; the latter offers the victim opportunity to seek justice in a court of law, although most times, victims hardly indicate interest in seeking judicial intervention or redress from their institution's authority partly due to fear of being discountenanced and ultimately get intimidated by the violators.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

The most significant factors influencing increasing rates of suicide attempts amongst young adults are failed love relationships, unrealistic societal expectations from young adults, unemployment resulting to defeatist mind-sets, parent's attitudes of comparing children with their age/class mates, academic failure, health challenges defiling medical solutions, financial problems, forced sexual intercourse, inability to satisfy one's needs, rejection/abandonment by loved and trusted ones, unconcerned attitudes towards depressive symptoms, among other pertinent factors. There was no significant difference in the factors influencing suicide attempts amongst young adults as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on gender, course of study and type of institution. Moreover, there was significant difference in the factors influencing suicides amongst young adults as expressed by students of tertiary institutions in Lagos, Nigeria based on chronological age groups of respondents.

The campaign against suicide attempts/commission can be achieved if all concerned stakeholders will pull the necessary machineries in place in order to end the menace especially amongst youngsters who make up the active and productive group in the society. With the recent statement by the National Agency for Food Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) that it would further regulate the use/accessibility of sniper fluids amongst Nigerians, it is hoped that other relevant stakeholders (counselling practitioners' bodies), government (including the federal ministries of women, as well as youth & sports development) and nongovernment agencies as well as the media would rise to the challenge in ensuring that occurrences of suicides become a history in Nigerian societies.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are therefore suggested:

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1. Access to suicide-encouraging materials should be strictly regulated in the society with adequate laws guiding their use in the domestic settings.
2. Counselling and mental health practitioners should be adequately engaged in order to help give proper orientations to the teeming youngsters. This will go a long way in assisting them to always be in-charge of situations of life rather than being overwhelmed by them, which ultimately makes them do untoward things to their own selves. This will afford youngsters the opportunity to explore viable alternatives when situations arise, thus, preventing them from taking suicidal decisions.
3. Government through its ministries of youth and sport development, women affairs as well as education should periodically organize sensitization campaigns against suicide ideation in collaboration with relevant counselling and mental health bodies.
4. Parents should equally provide adequate guidance to their children either in or out of schools with appropriate follow-ups in order to have knowledge of their situations before they find solace in inappropriate alternatives.
5. Movies and song lyrics should be adequately checked to ensure that they teach morals and not encourage suicidal acts.
6. It may be interesting for future studies to compare suicidal attempts amongst young adults with those of older adults in the society.

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