

**THE LANGUAGE OF SUICIDE NOTES: A  
GENDER-BASED FORENSIC LINGUISTIC  
STUDY**

**BY**

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**ISLAMABAD**

**JUNE, 2021**

**The Language of Suicide Notes: A Gender-Based Forensic  
Linguistic Study**

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BS English, National University of Modern Languages, 2017

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**In English**

To

FACULTY OF ENGLISH STUDIES



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES, ISLAMABAD

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## ABSTRACT

### **Title: The Language of Suicide Notes: A Gender-Based Forensic Linguistic Study**

Suicide notes are one of the prominent and intriguing areas of study in Forensic Linguistics which is relatively under explored in Pakistan. The present study has analyzed a total of 70 Pakistani suicide notes from the perspective of Forensic Linguistics. As little research is conducted on the language of Pakistani suicide notes within various disciplines, the study is conducted at grass-root level. This research study has attempted to analyze a total of 70 Pakistani suicide notes, written in English, from the perspective of Forensic Linguistics. Lexical choices, with regards to gender, are analyzed to trace out the linguistic patterns in Pakistani suicide notes using sketch engine. The suicide notes are also analyzed to determine aspects of language in male and female suicide notes that depict the features of the interpersonal theory of suicide. In addition to this, forensic semantic analysis is performed by incorporating relevance theory to extract social issues leading to suicide in Pakistan. It is noted that male suicide notes are more precise and to the point with less use of conjunctions which makes the structure less complex. On the other hand, female suicide notes are merely elaborative with comparatively more conjunctions, adjectives and adverbs. Where male suicide notes usually discuss about ‘money’, ‘job’ and ‘family’, female notes talk about their ‘decisions’, ‘dreams’ and ‘pains’. Characteristics of ‘Perceived Burdensome’ were majorly found in Pakistani suicide notes. It was noted that Males usually suicide over lack of financial opportunities, debt, depression and inability to fulfill the responsibility whereas, females usually suicide due to disapproval of choices, forced approvals, inability to select their own choices and stress. The findings of the study provide a solid foundation to build on for the future researches which could explore other variables with extensive data.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- WHO World Health Organization
- NPCC National Poison Control Centre
- MLC Medico-legal Centre
- PPC Pakistan Penal Code
- LIWC Linguistic Inquiry Word Count
- WWII World War Two
- LMIC Low- and Middle-Income Countries
- CMH Combined Military Hospital
- DUA Data Use Agreement
- IAFL International Association of Forensic Linguistics

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First and foremost, praises and thanks to Allah, for his showers of blessings which allowed me to complete this study.

I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my research supervisor, Dr Ghazala Kausar, who remained patient while guiding me through mistakes. Her vision, support and endless push deeply inspired and helped me throughout the journey. I owe thanks to NUML and its faculty members for providing me with competitive environment which made me build the urge to learn and polish myself.

My deepest thanks and love to my parents who encouraged me to opt for post-graduation. My father who, being military personnel, made me learn hard work, honesty and dedication. My mother, whose endless prayers kept me going. It is the result of their prayers and assistance that I'm able to fulfill my desires and dream bigger.

Thank you all.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my Parents who always picked me up on time and showered me with their endless support, encouragement and love

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among youngsters (WHO, 2019). According to World Health Organization (WHO), around 800,000 people die due to suicide every year which makes up one person per every 40 seconds around the globe. In Pakistan, between 15 to 35 people end their lives every day (Atika, 2020). This sums up as one person per hour at least. Pakistan's suicide rate is considered below the worldwide average. The death rate in Pakistan due to suicide, as given by the World Bank, was 7.28 per 1000 people in 2016. It is to be noted that the truth remains hidden and suicide rate is inferred to be far ahead of what is being mentioned. This is due to the reason that majority of suicide cases go underreported and are kept under covers due to social stigma, religious and moral values and the fear of embarrassment. According to a report, 'approximately 15-20 patients are admitted daily at the NPCC, many of whom consume poison deliberately in order to kill themselves'. (Hassan, 2019)

Suicide notes are one of the prominent and intriguing areas of study in Forensic Linguistics. A Suicide note, that is also called a 'death note', is a message which is written by a person who dies or intends to die. Over the past few years, the amount of suicide has deliberately increased which has made researchers from different fields curious about the phenomenon of it. Hence, various studies with regards to different disciplines have come in view.

Forensic Linguistics is generally defined as the way of applying linguistic knowledge to a particular social setting, namely the legal forum. In its broader sense, we can say that Forensic linguistics is majorly used to attribute authorship in written texts. It is also used to distinguish truthful from deceptive statements for example, in cases involving equivocal deaths. Through deconstructing an author's lexical choice, syntactic structure and discourse coherence, demographic and psychological traits are determined and evaluated which can aid judicial agents (Daelemans, 2013; Rosso & Cagnina, 2017).

The field of Forensic linguistics started gaining interest of researchers in late 1990s. Researchers found it interesting to go deeper into the legal text in order to investigate and analyze it. According to Olsson (2013) "Literally any text or item of

spoken language has the potential of being a forensic text. If a text is somehow implicated in a legal or criminal context then it is a forensic text". The text targeted for forensic analysis is the one that is taken from the criminal context like murderer, suicide letter or note, suspicious death, narcotics investigation, terrorism, criminal reports etc.

The language of suicide notes has been studied from various perspectives over the past few years. Cabana (2005) claims that 60% of suicide notes have the characteristic of 'lack of belonging' in them. He also asserts that suicide notes written by women are significantly longer and elaborative with more emotional content, denials, tentative expressions, pronouns in 1<sup>st</sup> person plurals and verbs in past and future tenses. In contrast, suicide notes of men are mainly short and to the point. Alfian (2018) declares that a suicide note can use both positive and negative adjectives in order to communicate the emotional mind. The study by Alfian (2018) concludes that in order to capture deeper overview of suicide notes, an in-depth study is needed which can be done through semantic and pragmatic analysis.

According to Pakistan Penal Code 306 of the Criminal Procurement Act, suicide cases must be reported to police and evaluated in the medico-legal center (MLC). Due to fear of embarrassment, confidentiality around such sensitive cases, social and legal taboos associated with the act and complicated legal procedures, such cases are often underreported in Pakistan. Despite being a harsh reality, suicide and suicidal behaviors have not been well studied, and very little research has been conducted in this field. This study, therefore, looks deeper into the phenomenon in order to fill the gap in research.

As little research is conducted on the language of Pakistani suicide notes within various disciplines, this study is conducted at grass-root level. The analysis of the use of lexical categories and characteristics by both genders would contribute in the field of forensic linguistics. The characteristics of male and female suicide notes would serve to identify genuine suicide notes with respect to the provided features. The study would also highlight reasons behind the ever-increasing suicide rate through forensic semantic analysis. It has also gone deeper into the text and applied the 'Interpersonal Theory of Suicide' in order to configure if features of the theory are present in writings of Pakistani suicide notes written in English and the way environmental features affect the theory. The theory predicts that the desire of ending one's life is related to 'the feeling

of being a burden' or 'the lack of belonging' which leads to hopelessness. The study hence, have observed suicide notes on the basis of these features and traced out phrases depicting these characteristics.

### **1.1 Statement of Problem**

Suicide notes have been studied across related disciplines. The linguistic perspective of suicide notes is under exploration in the West yet this perspective is barely touched in Pakistan due to which the linguistic patterns of Pakistani suicide notes are unidentified. The linguistic analysis of suicide notes would highlight the linguistic patterns of the notes that might give deeper understanding of the gender variation in suicide notes and would identify genuine suicide notes from the simulated ones. The semantic analysis would serve to highlight the major issues in Pakistani society leading to an ever-increasing rate of suicide in Pakistan.

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

The objectives of the study are:

- To identify the lexical choices in Pakistani suicide notes with regards to gender.
- To determine interpersonal features in male and female suicide notes.
- To semantically examine suicide notes of both genders to determine social issues.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The questions of the study are:

- What are the lexical choices in suicide notes which vary across gender?

- How are interpersonal features depicted in the language of Suicide Notes?
- How are words, phrases and sentences used in suicide notes to depict social issues?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The study serves to be beneficial from linguistic, forensic and psychological perspectives. Linguistic patterns are distinguished between males and females through linguistic analysis of suicide notes which would help to identify real and simulated suicide notes. The forensic semantic analysis of suicide notes would help to interpret meaning behind discourse. This would highlight prevailing social issues faced by males and females leading to suicide. The study would serve as an eye-opener for the readers who would be able to distinguish gender variation in suicide notes depicting mindset of people and the social factors leading to suicide.

#### **1.5 Delimitation of the Study**

The research is focused on Pakistani suicide notes written in English. The availability of suicide notes, written in English, under the time frame when the research was conducted served as a delimitation. Therefore, this study is delimited to 70 Pakistani suicide notes.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The trend of writing suicide notes has grown over the past few years which has deliberately increased researches done in the field. The disciplines as cognitive sciences, social sciences and linguistics have mainly drawn interest towards the phenomenon of suicide and suicide notes. Up till now, several researches are conducted throughout the world which have established and claimed a lot about the features, characteristics, aspects and phenomenon of suicide notes. It has hence, contributed to benefit researches from inter-disciplines due to which various dimensions are coming into view.

The level of research has risen in Pakistan over the past few years where different arising topics have been studied and researched. Suicidal behaviors yet remain under-studied and under-researched in Pakistan. The official mortality statistics on suicide are not available for not being a part of the national vital registration system nor are they reported to the WHO. In the last couple of years, numerous suicide cases are reported in ample of public hospitals which draws attention to the fact that suicide is a serious public health issue that needs to be addressed and taken care of.

According to the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) 325, 'Whoever attempts to commit suicide and does any act towards the commission of such offence, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, (or with fine, or with both)'. The law, therefore, derives from the tenants of Islam which condemns suicidal acts. Under this regulation and law, such cases must be reported to the police and be investigated and evaluated in the medico-legal center (MLC). Suicide is a criminal offense with punitive laws imposed. Due to social stigma, fear of embarrassment, religious prohibition and legal issues, such cases are often under reported or either mislabeled as 'accidental' or having a medical condition. As private hospitals are quite expensive in Pakistan, financial inabilities are also one of the reasons for untreated issues. The social consequences add up to the difficulty where families are stigmatized and ostracized. Stigmatization of suicidal behaviors in Pakistani society is one of the most prominent factors which results in lack of research on this subject. Therefore, it is difficult to cover and infer the exact number of suicide cases. Because of the prevailing

obstacles, very little research is done on suicide in the context of Pakistan specifically in the field of linguistics.

Suicide notes are tricky to analyze and work upon not only because their set length isn't identified but because of the view that filtering a genuine suicide note from a falsified one is a different and complicated task as well. Along with the use of statistical techniques and views from psychologists, it is important to distinguish lexical choices made by suicide notes of males and females. The forensic semantic analysis, by denoting the use of words, clauses and phrases, would tend to benefit the field of forensic linguistics by providing an over view of the genuine suicide notes which may would help to filter genuine notes from the fabricated ones.

This chapter will further discuss why the concept of suicide is often taken tabooed and the stigma attached to it. The latter part of the chapter discusses previous researches done on suicide notes and the researches performed in Pakistan on this rising issue.

## **2.1 Suicide and Stigma**

Before diving into the analysis of suicide notes, it is important to understand and know why the concept of suicide is often stigmatized and tabooed in the society. Suffice it to say that the very act of killing oneself used to be a crime in some countries, and that the criminal language associated with the suicidal act endures in the lexicon. Specifically, using the phrase “to ‘commit’ suicide” equates the act with homicide or fratricide, and suggests that it is akin to “self-murder”. The non-critical and non-thinking use of this phrase preserves the implied criminality of the act.

Several myths associated with suicide have also contributed to the perseverance of stigma. Notions that people who kill themselves are “cowards” and “selfish” persist to this day, while attempters are often viewed as “attention seekers” who are not to be taken seriously. The idea that suicidality is hereditary can sometimes serve to further torture families who experience a suicidal death. Apart from this, religions have contrasting views towards suicide which also adds on to view where the concept is stigmatized in the society.

In the view perspective of Christianity, nothing in the bible explicitly mentions that it prohibits suicide. There are, in fact, a lot of incidents discussed in it which states

about people who died by suicide. After the increasing number of suicides in Christian society and the book written by St. Augustine 'The City of God' in the fifth century, suicide got condemned by the laws. St Augustine justified the prohibition of suicide by interpreting a biblical commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' omitting the other phrases. By the sixth century, suicide was taken as a sinful act and all suicides were denied Christian burial. Criminal as well as civil laws were enacted to discourage suicide among the members of the society. Public discussions were held among people mentioning that harming one's body is something disapproved by the church and is prohibited.

There are mixed views on the concept of suicide by Jews. In the views of Orthodox Judaism, suicide is condemned by the Jewish law and is marked as a major sin. Non-Orthodox views may infer suicide as a disease or disorder. Most authorities state that it is not permissible in any case to enforce death in order to avoid pain. In the history of Judaism, mass suicide is the most discussed form of suicide which is considered acceptable by looking at historical incidents. In 66 CE, when the first Jewish-Roman War held, Sicarii the Jewish extremists overcame the Roman garrison of Masada. After the devastation of second temple in 70 CE, numerous Jewish fled Jerusalem and collectively killed themselves instead of becoming slaves to Romans. Though suicide is acceptable by a certain Jewish society, generally religious burial rituals are condemned upon a suicide committer.

According to Buddhism, past acts and deeds of an individual affects the present and future. The intentional acts of mind, speech and body have reaction. According to Buddhism, every person experience suffering in their life due to the past deeds. The concept of karma is very evident in Buddhism and it is believed that karma is the one responsible for sufferings due to negative or bad past deeds. As suicide is viewed as a negative act, it is believed that if a person commits suicide in anger, he would be reborn in a sorrowful realm due to negative final thoughts.

One exception is evident in the Buddhist tale of Bhikkhu which is named as Vakkali who was very sick and suffering from unbearable pain. It is said that he committed suicide after being helpless and unable to bear the pain. Buddhism, therefore, does not strongly condemn suicide. The views are mixed towards the view of this act.

Suicide is regarded as spiritually unacceptable in Hinduism. It is considered to be equivalent to murder. It is also believed that the person who commits suicide is converted to a ghost after death and wanders here and there for the rest of life. According to Mahabharata talks of suicide, those who commit suicide can never be blessed to live in heaven. They will never find peace and would wander around in despair and pain throughout.

In the light of Islam, the holy book Quran strongly prohibits Suicide. Allah is the creator of everything and he is the one who is responsible for taking lives. It is said, 'He gives life and causes death, and to him you will be returned' (Surah Yunas, Verse 56). The act of killing oneself is like bringing devastation to the self. As it is said, 'And do not kill yourselves. Surely, God is most merciful to you' (Quran 4:29). Quran, hence, makes it very eminent that one's life is sacred which should not be deliberately destroyed. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said (Narrated by Abu Huraira), 'whoever throws himself down from a mountain and kills himself will be in the fire of hell, throwing himself down therein for ever and ever. Whoever takes poison and kills himself, his poison will be in his hand and he will be sipping it in the fire of hell forever and ever. Whoever kills himself with a piece of iron, that piece of iron will be in his hand and he will be stabbing himself in the stomach with it in the fire of hell, for ever and ever.' (Bukhari)

Suicide is taken as unacceptable by almost every religion. Where some religions show a little leniency, most of them are firm and strict with their laws and regulations. It is also observed that majority religions believe that the soul and body belong to the ultimate reality, God. Therefore, the body should not be harmed intentionally. Islam is a religion of peace and integrity. It strongly condemns suicidal acts and very strict punishments are mentioned for the ones who disobey the rules. Due to strict laws and social stigma, such cases are often kept hidden. The true facts and figures with regard to suicide are inaccessible as most of such cases are underreported. Hence, very little to no study is done on the analysis of the language of suicide notes in Pakistan. This study would look deeper into the language of suicide notes to depict common features and address issues faced by the Pakistani society.

## **2.2 Suicide and Suicide Note**

Before getting into the research which concerns with suicide notes, the study would like to define 'Suicide' and 'Suicide Note' from the perspective of research. According to an online resource, 'Suicide is killing yourself on purpose' (Vocabulary.com dictionary). As per the Collins Concise Dictionary (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, p1346), suicide is 'The act of an instance of killing oneself intentionally'. The Black's Law Dictionary (6<sup>th</sup> Edition, p1434) mentions that suicide is 'Self destruction, the deliberate termination of one's own life'. This is to be noted that this is rather the simplest form of suicide which the research is dealing with. Other complicated forms of suicide include suicide by cop, tricked suicide and many other forms which are not under study.

Defining a suicide note is important considering two of the major issues pertinent to whether the piece of writing is a suicide note or not and whether it should be added in the sample or not. One issue is concerned with the fact that whether the writing is considered to be a suicide note or not. The research has not included the complex forms of suicide notes such as recorded videos, audios, telephone calls or any other form of conversation done before the suicidal behavior which might could be added. Therefore, the recent research solely deals with the suicide notes deliberately written by the person before performing a suicidal behavior. Only text-based notes written in 'English' are added in the sample of this study. As a suicide note is a note written by a person who dies or intends to die, the suicide notes which this study would be dealing with are the ones from deceased and survivors of suicidal act.

## **2.3 Forensic Linguistics**

Forensic linguistics is the branch of Applied Linguistics (especially corpus linguistics) which applies linguistic knowledge, analysis methods and linguistic insights to the context of fields including law, crime investigation, trial and judicial procedure. Its scope includes not only various parts in crime investigation and judicial procedures but also the fields of authorship identification.

Generally, the term 'forensics' refers to the application of scientific methods to crime investigation, which covers the legal standards of admissible evidences and criminal procedures. The roles of forensic scientists are to collect, preserve, and analyze the evidence during investigation. Where some forensic scientists visit the place of

crime to collect evidence, others perform an analysis on objects in the laboratory. Forensic linguistics was first initiated in 1968 by a professor Jan Svartvik (Svartvik, 1968), where he analyzed the writings by Timothy John Evans (a prominent murder suspect). He analyzed four writings with several linguistic features and found considerable discrepancies among the writings. It implied that the writings might not have been written by the same author. In 1993, the International Association of Forensic Linguists (IAFL) was founded, and an International Journal of Law, Language and Discourse was started to be published in 1994. There are roughly three areas of application of linguistic knowledge in the forensic contexts: (i) understanding of lexis and languages in the law, (ii) understanding language use in the judicial processes, and (iii) the provision of linguistic evidence for the judicial decisions. More specifically, forensic linguistics handles the followings: the language of legal documents, the language of the police and law enforcement, interviews with children and vulnerable witnesses in the legal system, courtroom interaction, linguistic evidence and expert witness testimony in courtrooms, authorship attribution and plagiarism, forensic phonetics, and speaker identification (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007, p. 5).

The discipline of forensic linguistics is not homogenous in nature therefore, a range of experts and researchers from different fields are involved. Olsson (2004) defines forensic linguistics as an application of linguistic knowledge to a particular (social) environment (i.e., a legal situation), which is located in the interface between language, crime and law. According to Olsson (2008), every spoken and written discourse can be counted as forensic text if it is implicated in judicial or criminal situations. Suicide notes are a unique piece of forensic information in the investigation of a suspicious death. The note also tends to shed light on possible reasons for suicide. The application of linguistic knowledge to the study of suicide notes plays an important role in investigation of the authenticity and intention behind suicide.

## **2.4 Previous Researches on Suicide Notes**

The phenomenon of suicide is being studied and analyzed from various perspectives. Some of previous researches, the methods and perspectives are discussed below.

### **2.4.1 Cognitive Analysis of Suicide Notes**

Psychological autopsy was used as a tool to analyze sociodemographic and psychiatric profile of 40 patients leaving suicide notes among the cosmopolitan,

primarily urbanized population of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Bhatia and Verma (2006) critically analyzed the cases. Upon the analysis, they concluded that a majority of suicide note writers were 21 to 30 years of age (55%) and were males (65%). The most common and convenient place for them to commit suicide was their own home (80%) and hanging was among the most common methods. All suicide notes were handwritten. The last wish of suicide committers was mentioned in 30% of the notes. 20% of the suicide notes were addressed to a sibling. Disturbed love affair and financial problems were the prevailing reasons. Along with that, hopelessness and depression were the most common diagnosis in 52.5% of such cases. The study analyzed and discussed the factors and causes leading to suicide with reference to age group and gender differences.

Hamilton (2012) conducted a research in order to understand the thoughts, condition and life experiences that ultimately lead to suicidal act. He analyzed if suicide was an escape from physical and emotional trauma and pain for suicide attempters. Suicide notes and case files obtained from coroner's records from the year 2000 to 2009 in the Metropolitan area of Dayton, Ohio were analyzed and researched. A total of 580 cases were analyzed for the research. The data of the study included photocopies of suicide notes and a database containing investigators' reports, demographic information, and information concerning the method of suicide. The study suggested that the samples in which escape was determined as the primary motivation for suicide, were similar to the overall samples suggesting that escape from psychological or physical pain may be a unifying characteristic of suicidal thought and action.

In a study by Cabana et.al (2015), 80 suicide notes were analyzed searching for risk factors proposed by the Interpersonal Theory by Joiner. The suicide notes were classified according to the presence or absence of suicide risk factors that were analyzed linguistically with the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count Program. It was observed that in 60% of the notes, the "lack of belonging" factor was the most common risk factor. Various linguistic profiles in suicide notes were found according to the presence or absence of this factor. The study confirmed relevance of the interpersonal risk factors proposed as issues present in a high percentage of notes and found linguistic differences according to its presence or absence in the suicide notes.

Namratha (2015), in a descriptive study on suicide notes, analyzed a total of 22 suicide notes. The respective notes were written between the years 2010 to 2013 in Mysore, India. The method of the study included a collection of sociodemographic

features. Each note was categorized into four general categories i.e., Addressee, reasons stated, specific content and general focus of the note. From the results, it was found that most of the suicide note writers were married and that they were men. All of the suicide notes were handwritten where majority of the notes were in regional language Kannada. The length of the notes differed from just a few words to several paragraphs hence, the average of notes was 100 words. It was also noted that 55% of the notes were not addressed to a specific person. The rest were addressed to either relatives, spouse or mother. 50% of them did not blame anyone for their suicide whereas the rest blamed their close relations. The content of suicide notes depict a consistent theme of apology, hopelessness, shame and guilt. 32% of the notes mentioned their last wish. It was therefore concluded that suicide notes should be studied to get a clearer picture and scenario and suicide.

Crossman (2019) talks about *Le Suicide* by Emile Durkheim where he reviews that the more socially integrated and connected a person is, the less likely he or she is to commit suicide. As social integration decreases, people are more likely to commit suicide. Durkheim analyzed suicide rate between the Catholics and Protestants. He concluded that Protestants are more likely to perform suicide than the Catholics who are more poised, patient and satisfied with their inner self. It was also found that men commit suicide more frequently than women especially the soldiers as compared to the civilians. According to Durkheim, taking your own life is not only the result of psychological and emotional factors but it includes social factors as well. The more a person is socially active, the less are the chances for suicide. Whereas, if a person is less likely to interact with people, chances are higher of getting into loneliness ultimately leading to brain sickening and suicide. He characterizes suicide into anomic, altruistic, egoistic and fatalistic suicide mentioning that these are the only reasons for committing suicide.

Where the studies have researched upon the average length of suicide notes and the factors and issues leading to suicide with respect to age differences, it has also discussed the prevailing methods of suicides along with the ones which are mostly used. The studies have also analyzed the psychological aspects and issues with respect to people of different religious sects and have pointed issues of specific societies. A lot of suicide notes are analyzed using psychological theories configuring suicide risk factors in the writing and the phenomenon of suicide. This study intends to analyze suicide



notes merely from linguistic perspective. It would discuss the features and characteristics present in suicide notes along with the common use of clauses and phrases found in most of the notes to depict common issues faced by the society of Pakistan.

#### **2.4.2 Linguistic Analysis of Suicide Notes**

A corpus of 286 suicide notes, that was collected from Birmingham Coroner's Office along with some additional findings from 33 real and 33 fabricated notes from Los Angeles, was critically analyzed and studied by Shapero (2011). The thesis analyzed the language of suicide notes and things that the note writers find important to talk about in their last writing. He also compared the topics used in real and fabricated suicide notes and searched for clues to differentiate a genuine suicide note from a fabricated one. Automatic semantic tagger was used for the analytical purposes. It was found that suicide notes contain significant proportions of items indicating affection, the future and their authors' kin. The notes also include significant proportions of pronouns, names, negatives, intensifiers, maximum quantity terms, and discourse markers. It was also noted that the simulated suicide notes contain features of oddness as naming references, melodrama, vagueness and illogical semantics however, the observation is totally generalized.

Aydin (N.d) in the study, takes out adjectives from a total of 570 words suicide note of Kurt Cobain. The taken adjectives are then classified into three major groups. Initially two groups, for positive and negative adjectives, were made. Upon classifying, it was found that there are neutral adjectives as well. Hence, a third group for neutral adjectives was made. The adjectives were classified as positive, negative or neutral on the basis of their contextual meaning. It was found that out of 51 adjectives, 50.98% of adjectives were negative, 33.33% were positive and 15.68% were neutral. The use of negative adjectives depicted the negative mood of the writer and his hopelessness whereas, the use of positive adjectives showed that the writer also tends to highlight the positive areas of his life and seeps through his good memories.

A total of 144 consecutive suicide cases were analyzed out of which 23 suicide Notes from Spain in Spanish were studied using Linguistic Inquiry Word Count (LIWC) by Cabana et.al (2015). The sociodemographic and forensic characteristics were observed and explained on the basis of gender, age and environment. It was found that suicide note writers were mostly young, single, divorced or widowed, and

sentimental troubles were reported. In contrast, non-writers more often had a diagnosis of mental illness. The linguistic analysis of the suicide notes with LIWC showed differences in suicidal speech by gender, and added the innovative finding of linguistic differences according to the rural/ urban background of the writers of the notes. Suicide notes written by women showed more complexity and more interest in the transmission of information to others. The notes written by women were comparatively longer with more depiction of emotions, first person pronouns, denials and verbs in past tense while rural victims showed higher social integration in their suicide notes.

In another research, Cabana et.al (2015) analyzed 80 suicide notes, collected from Chile, from the perspective of clinical and linguistic analysis. The theoretical framework of the study followed the interpersonal theory of suicide presented by Joiner. The suicide notes were classified according to the presence or absence of suicide risk factors proposed by the Interpersonal Theory of Suicide and were analyzed linguistically with the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count program. One or both interpersonal risk factors indicated by the theory were identified in 60% of the notes. The “lack of belonging” factor was the most common risk factor. When comparing the use of words included in the linguistic categories of the LIWC according to the presence or absence in the suicide note of the “feeling like a burden” factor, significant differences are being found in the use of words in the “optimism” ( $p = 0.012$ ), “cause” ( $p = 0.002$ ) and “achievement” ( $p = 0.033$ ) categories. This usage was greater in the notes with this factor. In this case, the notes were also longer than those without this factor. Where the following researches have used LIWC for the linguistic analysis, the current study have used ‘Sketch Engine’ to configure varied lexical choices and themes in both genders. It has also analyzed the text at semantic level.

Chaski (2012) enumerates some phrases which are frequent in the suicide notes. They present apologize (I'm sorry or please forgive me), love (I love you or I cannot live without you), anger (I cannot please you or I hope you are happy now), complaint (The situation is not acceptable or I can no longer tolerate), or psychological shock (since the divorce). Chaski (2012) claims that suicide notes do not have the complete form of writing, but that they contain 1 to 4 different writing styles. The study also points out that none of suicide notes demonstrates the 6 types of writing styles.

Sudjana, E (2013) analyzes the suicide note of Kurt Cobain. The motive for the study was to predict genuineness of the note along with the motive behind his act of

suicide. The note was analyzed using the forensic semantic theory where phrases and sentences were interpreted and explained. The study concludes that overall tone of the note was negative. Therefore, negative words were mainly presented in the form of ambiguous statements and metaphors. The text also predicts that Cobain was suffering from serious depression that was obvious in the language used by him.

A similar study was conducted by Malini, Ni and Tan (2016) where the researcher analyzed the note written by Virginia Woolf who died of suicide in 1941. The data was obtained from an autobiography of Leonard Woolf and Virginia Woolf by Josh Jones. LIWC and forensic semantic analysis was used in the study to find genuineness of the note and to clarify the misquoted statements that went viral on media after the death. On the analysis, it was found that the note written by Virginia Woolf was a genuine note which showed positive emotional tone towards family members and husband. The suicide note of Virginia Woolf also infers that it wasn't written to expose the cause of committing suicide but to comfort her dear ones and to mention that they would do better without her. Upon the forensic semantic analysis, it was also evident from the note that the writer was psychologically sick and probably had a bipolar disorder. Apart from that, the on-going depressive environment of WWII also affected the peace of mind of the suicide note writer.

Sboev et.al (2015) mentions that the psychological state of the author(s) can be analyzed by psycholinguistic markers at the moment of writing. These markers include pronouns, nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, the ratio of adjectives and verbs in the writings, word count (i.e., word tokens in corpus linguistics), the average number of words used in the sentence (i.e., mean sentence length), the ratio of nouns to verbs, number of exclamation punctuation, the number of emoticons, and so on. From a forensic linguistic point of view, the suicide notes contain typical (linguistic) properties. For the purpose of analyzing suicide notes in forensic linguistics, it is necessary to get help from all of the theoretical linguistics (including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis). Most of the early linguistic studies on suicide texts have been conducted based on a corpus which is compiled by Shneidman. The corpus contains 66 writings, and they are mixtures of genuine and fake suicide notes. The texts are linguistically analyzed with the techniques in discourse analysis, the uses of various auxiliary verbs (including modals), or the verbs which show the difference between the genuine and the fake.

A lot of researches have been conducted on suicide notes from linguistic perspective. Research tools such as Automatic Semantic Tagger is used to analyze real suicide notes along with the fabricated ones to decipher how they differ from genuine notes and what clues can distinguish them. Suicide notes of famous personalities are studied to configure the use of common positive and negative adjectives in them and to find if the notes were genuinely written by them or not. The difference in language of suicide notes with respect to parts of speech, phrases and clauses is also discussed with variables as age, gender and ethnicity. It is to be noted that the aforementioned studies are done from the western perspective, the current research have studied Pakistani Suicide notes written in English from linguistic perspective. It would discuss the lexical choices made by both genders and the use of common phrases and clauses depicting issues of the society through forensic semantic analysis. The Interpersonal Theory of Suicide would also be used to see if the occurrence of the features that are present in the theory vary with cultural and environmental changes.

### **2.4.3 Researches on the concept of Suicide in Pakistan**

According to Wikipedia, suicide in Pakistan is a minor public health issue. By looking at the statement, we conclude that suicide is something which is not really affecting people of the nation and such cases are seldom found in the society of Pakistan. Whereas, in accordance with an article by dawn.com, Rehman (2019) claims that 15 to 35 people commit suicide every day which marks that at least one person ends his life every hour. The statements from both websites seem contradictory. The epidemic has surely plagued the society of Pakistan but despite of all these fatal outcomes, no official statistics are available nationwide. This is due to the fact that the exact number of suicide occurrences are unknown as most of the cases are underreported in Pakistan because of social stigma and pressure from the society. This is not only overshadowing the real number of suicides but also concealing a rising issue of our society which needs to be confronted and discussed at higher level to raise awareness and find the deep root cause of it.

In an article on suicide, Muhammad (2007) talks about the alarming proportion to which suicide cases have exceeded but a systematic study wasn't made possible due to few people reporting such cases. About 10% of the total suicide committers leave a suicide note with a valid reason of writing it. There are numerous reasons of writing a

suicide notes like: Confessing the guilt due to which they committed the deed, to apologize, to instruct survivors for the disposal of their property or any other reason. The ones who don't write a suicide note are said to have done all of the things beforehand and have nothing to say. Anecdotal evidence from Pakistan reveals that most of the suicide notes are written to apologize for committing the act and to mention their inability to cope with the misery they were in. It also came into view that most of the suicide committers who were mentally sick did not write a suicide note. As the suicide cases have increased deliberately in Pakistan, the psychological issues should not be overlooked and be catered by professionals in order to prevent features as hopelessness, depression and eventual suicide.

Turk (2018), in an article published in The Nation website, discusses the alarming rate to which suicide is rising every day. He talks about the suicide of four students in region Chitral after the announcement of their intermediate results. The students committed suicide because they were unable to achieve the desired marks. One of the students, who achieved 81% marks, yet committed suicide because he was not satisfied with the result. This alarming trend is therefore, raising questions upon the mental pressure and condition of the students. In Pakistan, academic reason tops the list of the cause of students to commit suicide. The set pressure from the family to achieve good grades, the push from the teachers to bring laurels for the institute, the rising merit in good colleges and the expectations from the self are leading to such tragic trend of suicide in Pakistan. The article concludes that instead of becoming a silent spectator, students should be trained to develop the capacity of coping up with failures. They should be given the leverage to choose their field of interest and parenting training for the parents should be conducted in order to make them understand that instead of thrusting their own ideas and opinions on their children, they should rather give them space to excel in the field they themselves want to choose and explore.

A suicide survey by Rehman and Haque (2019) published in Dawn website, talks about the WHO estimation of suicide in Pakistan made in 2016. The estimation was 2.5 out of 100,000 people which means that 5,500 people were reported to kill themselves. It is here to be noted that most of the suicide cases are not reported to the required authorities so the truth remains hidden. In order to understand trends of suicide in Pakistan, dawn.com published an online survey in December, 2018 asking respondents to anonymously share their stories and experiences related to suicide. As a

result, a total of 5157 responses came out of which 9% attempted to kill themselves during some phase of life, 45% of them thought of suicide while the rest of them knew somebody in their circle who attempted/tried to attempt suicide. The reason that marked the highest percentage for committing suicide was mental illness with financial issues and abuse as second and third highest reasons. Other reasons were being bullied, loss of loved one, relationship issues and divorce. When asked about the barriers which prevent them from seeking help, feeling like nothing will help, lack of social support and embarrassment & social stigma marked the highest percentages.

A study by Osama et.al (2014) discusses about suicide ideation among medical students in Pakistan. A cross-sectional study was done in this regard and undergraduate medical students from three medical colleges of Sindh were taken for the study. A total sample of 331 students was taken out of which 135 were males and 193 were females. A questionnaire was adapted and modified for the respondents. According to the research, suicide ideation was found in 118 students over the past one year out of which 46 had major plans for suicide and 16 of them tried to attempt suicide during some phase of their life. It was therefore recommended that such issues should be talked about and discussed to raise awareness and prevent people from mental illness which is the basic cause of suicide.

In a Psychological research, Shekhani et.al (2018) talks about the vast number of suicide cases that take place every year worldwide. Almost 75% of such cases happen in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) and Pakistan is one of them. A scoping review of suicidal behavior was done in Pakistan using Arksey and O'Malley's methodological framework. Ten different databases were used to retrieve 623 articles. The study revealed that majority of the numbers and data is from urban areas when two third of the population lives in rural areas. This creates a significant gap. Most of the studies were descriptive in nature with only a few using control groups. The studies, therefore were of poor quality due to lack of official statements. Despite of all the hurdles in the studies, it was observed that gender was an important determinant in the studies. There was a large representation of married women as compared to single women or men. It was further discussed that the major reasons of suicide in Pakistan are early marriages, arranged marriages, pressure to have children, desire to have son, curtailment of education, joblessness and domestic violence. The scoping review also

mentioned that most of the people who committed suicide were under the age of thirty. Hanging is the most common method of suicide with the use of poison as second.

It is pertinent from discussion that suicide is one of the rising issues in Pakistan which, due to stigma attached, is under researched. A lot has been researched and studied on suicide notes from cognitive, psychological and linguistic perspectives in the West. The research on this phenomenon in the context of Pakistan is lagging behind and the analysis of the language of suicide notes is barely touched upon. The current study intends to perform an in-depth analysis on the language of suicide notes through linguistic analysis. It would distinguish the lexical choices presented in suicide notes of males and females using Sketch Engine. The interpersonal theory of suicide would serve to analyze the features of the theory with respect to change in environment and gender. The forensic semantic analysis of Pakistani suicide notes written in English would highlight social issues leading to suicide through analyzing words, phrases and sentences of the notes.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The following chapter is going to elaborate the methodology used for the research. It would discuss in detail the theoretical framework of the study, approach towards the study, sampling technique, rationale, data analysis procedure and the reasons for choosing this methodology.

#### **3.1 Theoretical Framework**

The present study has integrated three theories to analyze Pakistani suicide notes written in English. In order to discuss analysis on the basis of gender, theory of Lakoff (1975) is used. Lakoff's (1975) seminal paper in the field discussed differences between men's and women's language viewing them as mere differences and not abnormalities. Lakoff (1975) also claimed that women employ a distinct style of speech, 'women's language', which comprises linguistic features that demonstrate and reinforce women's inferior position in the society. He proposed that women's speech can be distinguished from that of men in a number of ways like their use of hedges, phrases, adjectives, grammar etc.

The study has also employed the 'Interpersonal Theory of Suicide' presented by Joiner (2005) which was further expanded by Orden and colleagues (2010), in order to analyze the features of theory which are depicted in Pakistani suicide notes of males and females. According to the 'Interpersonal Theory of Suicide', the desire to end one's own life and leave the world is related to the simultaneous presence of two interpersonal factors; Thwarted belongingness and Perceived burdensomeness.

Thwarted belongingness or the lack of belonging further include two measures; loneliness and lack of reciprocal care from the community. Perceived burdensome or feeling of being a burden further includes the belief that one is incapable or deficient as to represent a burden or responsibility and the emotionally charged cognition of hatred towards oneself. The feeling of being a burden and the lack of belonging leads to mere hopelessness which results in the conduct of a suicide attempt.

Furthermore, the capability to engage in suicidal behavior is separate from the desire to engage in suicidal behavior. The model is depicted graphically with the



relatively small area of overlap in the Venn diagram representing the small minority of individuals who possess both desire and capability for suicide.

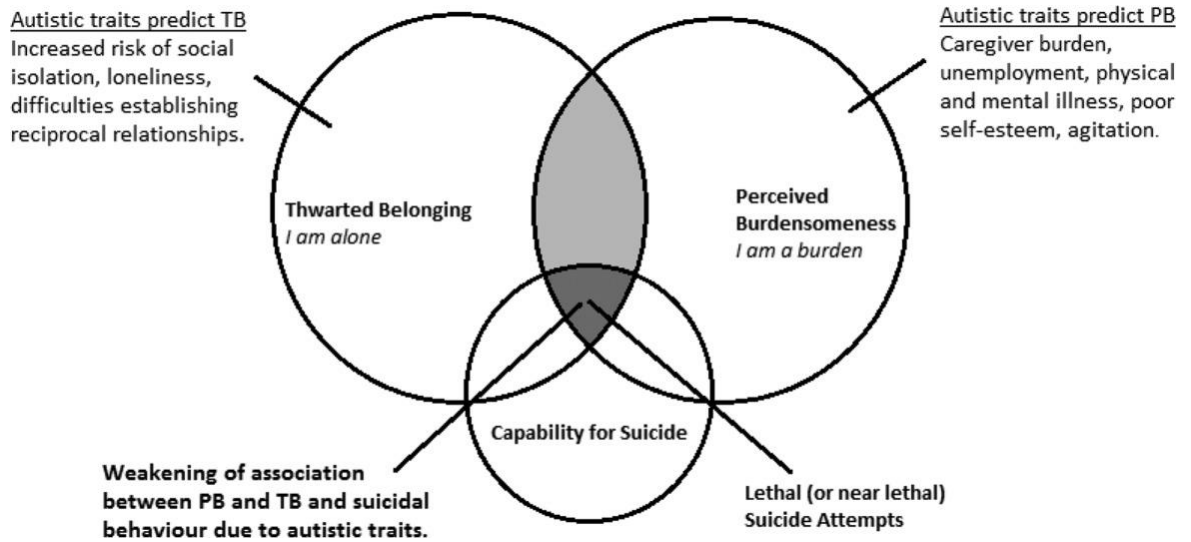


Fig 1: Venn diagram for Interpersonal Theory of Suicide

The research has also employed the model used by Alfian (2018) in order to conduct the Forensic Semantic Analysis of suicide notes. Therefore, forensic semantic analysis has been incorporated using the 'Relevance Theory' to highlight social issues among males and females which are leading them to suicide. Along with this, 'Sketch Engine' is used to find the differential lexical categories by males and females in Pakistani suicide notes written in English.

Relevance Theory is a framework built in order to understand the utterance interpretation which was proposed by Sperber, D and Wilson, D. It was first published in 1986 which was later revised in the year 1995. Relevance Theory is the amalgam of pragmatics and semantics which tends to explain that the process of communication does not only involve encoding, transfer and decoding of a message. It also involves complex features as inference and context. This is also named as the 'principle of relevance'. To interpret and explicate the meaning behind discourse of suicide notes, the theory of relevance is applied. It discusses and argues that the meaning which is derived from the linguistic expressions is 'radically underdetermined' the expressed proposition (Clark, 2013). In this way the theory of relevance is said to believe that while understanding an utterance, the pragmatic approach appears. It is also believed that the linguistically encoded meaning tends to behave as 'clues' for the interpretation.

The ‘Theory of Relevance’ also argues and rejects Grice’s maxims stating that maxims and rules aren’t required for interpretation. Hence, there could be multiple responses of an utterance and multiple meanings behind the same utterance. By using multiple ways of inferencing thoughts, the analysis of Pakistani Suicide notes written in English would reveal many hidden facets and problems by combining pragmatics and semantics in order to interpret the text. As the Relevance theory provides the analyst to analyze a statement in multifaceted ways, this makes it rather suitable for the analysis of suicide notes where contextual assumptions and inferences would be made in order to depict the meaning behind words.

The motive behind selecting and using the aforementioned theoretical underpinnings is due to the fact that they are in harmony with the research objectives. The Interpersonal Theory of Suicide determines the features of theory which are present in Pakistani suicide notes written in English and the variation that could be seen among genders and geographical margins. The Forensic Semantic Analysis of the suicide notes has been incorporated using ‘Relevance Theory’ which analyzes the words, phrases and sentences to depict the social causes for suicide among males and females.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

This research has employed ‘Mixed-Method Approach’ which is a scientific method of observation in which systematic integration or mixing of both qualitative and quantitative data within a single inquiry is done. This type of research refers to the meanings, concepts, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things along with their counts. The frequencies of the occurring parts of speech, with respect to the variables, would be depicted using Sketch Engine software which is a corpus manager and a text analysis tool that works with large samples of language, called text corpora. It denotes and identifies what characters are frequent and typical in a language.

The research is an unobtrusive research which does not require the researcher to interact with people he or she is studying hence, insight is extracted through their language. The linguistic analysis of suicide notes would serve to determine gender variation in Pakistani suicide notes with respect to their use of parts of speech. It would depict and distinguish the lexical terms used by males and females in their suicide notes and would provide a deeper analysis of the language. The application of ‘Interpersonal Theory of Suicide’ serve to find features of the theory which are present in Pakistani

suicide notes written in English. It also discusses the comparison of the use of features with respect to gender. The Forensic semantic analysis is also important in order to investigate, prove genuineness, seek the intention, and is useful to conduct the profiling analysis of the suicide notes (Malini, 2016 & Sudjana, 2013). Forensic Semantic Analysis deals with the subtle shades of meaning behind words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs in the field of forensics. The words, phrases and sentences, used in suicide notes of males and females are analyzed and interpreted to explain the meaning behind discourse and multifaceted meanings that a phrase can have. It also highlights and addresses the major issues faced by the society of today with respect to gender variation. Through the Forensic Semantic Analysis of suicide notes, the language of suicide note writers would be able to explain and mention the arising issues of the Pakistani society which are becoming the major factors for suicide.

### **3.3 Sample of the Study**

A sample of 70 suicide notes from Pakistan, written in English, were collected for the analysis. The suicide notes collected for the research were obtained from different Police Stations and CMH (Combined Military Hospitals). Out of 70 suicide notes, 52 notes were obtained from different police stations in which 27 were written by males and 25 by females. 18 suicide notes were obtained from various branches of CMH, out of which 10 were written by males and 8 by females.

### **3.4 Rationale for Sampling**

This study makes use of ‘Convenience Sampling’. Convenience Sampling is also known as Opportunity Sampling. It is a type of non-probability sampling which involves the drawing of sample from the part of population which is convenient to obtain or is close to hand. In case of this research, obtaining suicide notes written in English was very difficult due to social and ethical issues. The other problem that arose while collecting data was that very minute number of suicide cases are being reported in Pakistan and in most of the cases, such notes are mainly undisclosed by the families. In order to retrieve authentic suicide notes, different police stations were contacted. A form was circulated in all major police stations where they were required to provide information about suicide notes written in English. Apart from that, numerous branches of CMH were reached out for the psychiatrists and as much data was obtained as was possible.

### **3.5 Data Collection Method and Procedure**

The study deals with the data of people who attempted suicide and are either dead or survived through it. Direct interaction with the sample is not required hence, this research is an unobtrusive research which does not require the researcher to interact with the people he or she is studying. In order to collect suicide notes, different police stations in Pakistan were contacted to get information with regards to suicide cases. A form was circulated in all major police stations where they were required to pin suicide notes written in English. A total of 52 suicide notes written in English were obtained from the Police stations out of which 27 were written by males and the rest 25 were written by females. Anonymity of the suicide notes was ensured. Therefore, the coded version of notes was received where identity of the victims was kept private. Along with this, DUA (Data Use Agreement) was filled by the researcher so the data would not be shared with general public and kept confidential. The data was also collected from different psychologists and psychiatrists from CMH. Hence, 18 suicide notes, out of which 10 were written by males and 8 by females, were collected from them.

### **3.6 Codification of Data**

The suicide notes provided are kept confidential hence, their names are codified as per convenience. 27 Male suicide notes provided by the police stations, are codified as M1, M2.... Whereas, 10 male suicide notes provided by the hospitals are codified as MM1, MM2..... 25 Female suicide notes provided by the police stations, are codified as F1, F2..... Whereas, 8 female suicide notes provided by the hospitals are codified as FF1, FF2.....

### **3.7 Data Analysis Procedure**

The current research has studied suicide notes from a Forensic Linguistics perspective. Forensic linguistics is the application of linguistic knowledge, methods and insights to the forensic context of law, language and judicial procedure. As Forensic linguistics is inter-disciplinary, several approaches can be applied to fulfill the requirement of the study. It is not wrong to say that forensic linguistics needs the back of other linguistic fields to support the analysis which can either be taken from the

theory of grammar, phonetics, phonology, morphology, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis etc.

In order to fulfill first research objective which is to identify varied lexical choices in Pakistani suicide notes with regards to gender, 'Sketch Engine' is used which is a software program that is mainly used to analyze large samples of language, called text corpora. It denotes and identifies what characters are frequent and typical in language.

The use of Pronouns, Adjectives, Nouns, Verbs and other lexical categories are analyzed in male and female suicide notes to distinguish linguistic patterns in them. Percentages are carried out to compare the use of lexical items. Two corpora were made for this purpose. One was made for male suicide notes and one for female suicide notes and the total number of words for both corpora were noted. The word from lexical category under study was noticed in each suicide note individually. The total number of notes in which the specific word was present, was divided by the total number of words from the corpora. It was then further divided by 100 in order to get the percentages.

In order to fulfill second research objective that is to determine interpersonal features depicted in suicide notes, male and female suicide notes are analyzed individually to find presence of interpersonal factors affecting victims and causing them to suicide. The characteristics of the theory, 'thwarted belongingness' and 'perceived burdensome', are extracted out through analyzing phrases and sentences. Both male and female suicide notes are analyzed and discussed individually to configure occurrence of characteristics from the theory. The most occurring features are discussed and compared from the previous studies.

In order to fulfill third research objective that is to semantically examine suicide notes of both genders to determine social issues, forensic semantic analysis is carried out using Relevance Theory. The phrases and sentences are analyzed and inferences are made on the basis of linguistically encoded meaning, 'clues', to determine and address social issues which are leading men and women of Pakistani society towards suicide.

### **3.8 Ethical Issues**

Suicide notes were collected from different Police Stations and CMH all over Pakistan which were delivered to the researcher in a codified form where only gender and age was revealed by the authority. In order to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the research respondents, DUA (Data Usage Agreement) was filled by the researcher where it was instructed that the data would not be used for any other research or work. It would therefore, not be shared with general public and kept confidential.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter would discuss the analysis of the said data at three levels. In the first stage, it would statistically depict the use of lexical choices with respect to varied gender. The second stage will analyse the language of suicide notes with respect to the interpersonal theory of suicide tracing out the common factors found in the suicide notes of males and females. The third stage would conduct the forensic semantic analysis of suicide notes through relevance theory. It would depict major patterns of text, meaning behind discourse and would also bring light upon the issues faced by the society of Pakistan.

#### 4.1 Statistical Analysis of Suicide notes

On the basis of variables, male and female, the analysis would depict word frequency and percentage for both the notes on each section.

##### 4.1.1 Use of ‘Nouns’ in Male and Female Suicide Notes

The result for the use of nouns in male suicide notes is as follows:

**Table 1:** Use of ‘Nouns’ in Male Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
Life	31	84%
World	19	51%
Thing	8	22%
Parent	13	35%
Year	7	19%
Allah	10	27%
Case	6	16%
Nab	6	16%
Time	11	30%
Body	5	13%
Suicide	7	19%
Money	41	97%
Children	19	41%

Family	15	38%
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Nouns are majorly the subject of a sentence which depict what the conversation is about. Upon analysing the use of nouns in male suicide notes, it is noted that the major issues of talk in male suicide notes were ‘life’ (84%) and ‘world’ (51%) with worries of ‘time’ (30%), ‘family’ (38%) and ‘money’ (97%).

The results of the use of noun in female suicide notes is as follows:

**Table 2:** Use of ‘Nouns’ in Female Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
Life	42	100%
Day	16	42%
World	13	38%
Parent	21	55%
Family	18	53%
Way	10	20%
Thing	9	22%
People	8	27%
Decision	8	27%
Time	8	19%
Daughter	8	14%
Dream	37	94%
Year	7	10%
Allah	7	19%
Heart	11	19%
Place	5	5%
Pain	31	80%
Other	5	15%

Upon analysing the nouns used in female suicide notes, it is noted that the major issues discussed in female suicide notes were related to ‘life’ (100%) with worries of ‘parents’ (55%) ‘family’ (53), ‘decision’ (27%), ‘people’ (27%) and ‘dreams’ (94%). Female suicide notes generally talk about their previous ‘days’ (42%) and how their ‘heart’ (19%) had been in ‘pain’ (80%).



#### 4.1.2 Use of ‘Verbs’ in Male and Female Suicide Notes

The results for the use of verbs in male suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 3:** Use of ‘Verbs’ in Male Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
Be	158	94%
Do	46	67%
Have	45	97%
Get	21	57%
Try	20	51%
Feel	18	41%
Forgive	13	35%
Want	14	38%
Know	11	30%
Leave	10	27%
Live	10	24%
Tell	16	43%
Think	9	24%
Request	17	46%
Come	7	16%
Go	7	19%
Commit	7	19%
Give	6	16%
Take	6	13%
Love	6	16%
Make	6	13%
Investigate	6	11%
Wish	5	13%
Hope	5	11%
Lose	5	13%
Hurt	5	13%

Upon analysing the use of verbs in male suicide notes, it is found that the male suicide notes mostly discuss about what they’ve ‘done’ (67%) and the things they ‘have’ (97%). They talk about the times they ‘tried’ (51%) to make things better and

what they ‘wanted’ (38%). They ‘tell’ (43%) the untold and ‘request’ (46%) for the things they want. A lot of suicide notes have put up the statement of not ‘investigating’ (11%) over their dead body.

The results for the use of verbs in female suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 4:** Use of ‘Verbs’ in Female Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
Be	205	97%
Have	53	97%
Do	38	87%
Want	44	97%
Know	33	82%
Try	26	79%
Get	23	66%
Make	22	64%
Feel	29	85%
Leave	18	55%
Stay	17	51%
Live	16	45%
Tell	13	36%
Love	13	39%
Think	12	30%
See	11	27%
Dream	26	79%
Hurt	25	73%
Go	7	21%
Spend	7	18%
Apologize	15	45%
Take	6	18%
Stop	6	15%
Give	6	12%
End	6	12%
Say	5	15%
Pray	5	12%
Accept	5	15%
Marry	14	33%

Upon analysing the verbs used in female suicide notes, it is inferred that the suicide notes written by females talk about what they ‘wanted’ (97%) from life and how much they ‘tried’ (79%) to get it. They discuss how things ‘made’ (64%) them ‘feel’ (85%) and how they wanted to ‘live’ (45%) but the ‘dreams’ (79%) were not made true and how ‘hurt’ (73%) they felt in life. They discuss marriage and the kind of person they wanted to ‘marry’ (33%). A lot of suicide notes ‘said’ the unsaid and ‘apologized’ for their deeds.

#### 4.1.3 Use of ‘Adjectives’ in Male and Female Suicide Notes

The results for the use of adjectives in male suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 5:** Use of ‘Adjectives’ in Male Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
Good	15	35%
Sorry	12	32%
More	5	14%
Only	5	14%

Upon analysing the adjectives used in male suicide notes, it was observed that male use less adjectives as compared to females. This denotes that the conversation of males is often to the point and precise. The use of ‘good’ (35%) in the discourse predicts that male suicide notes mainly focus and discuss the positive aspects of life which were bestowed upon them.

The results for the use of adjectives in female suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 6:** Use of ‘Adjectives’ in Female Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
Good	28	76%
Sorry	52	97%
Happy	14	39%
Unable	19	58%
Own	11	27%
Only	6	15%
Bad	11	30%

Upon analysing the adjectives used in female suicide notes, it was observed that females use more adjectives as compared to men which shows that their discourse is mainly elaborated. Where men majorly discuss the positive aspects of life, females tend to discuss both in their notes.

#### 4.1.4 Use of ‘Adverbs’ in Male and Female Suicide Notes

The results for the use of adverbs in male suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 7:** Use of ‘Adverbs’ in Male Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
Not	58	94%
Just	12	27%
So	11	27%
Ever	8	19%
Sorry	6	16%
Even	6	14%
please	6	14%
Here	5	8%
Too	5	11%
always	5	14%
Now	5	8%

It is observed that male suicide notes are more precise and specific as they have comparatively less use of adjectives and adverbs in them.

The results for the use of adverbs in female suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 8:** Use of ‘Adverbs’ in Female Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
Not	76	100%
Never	18	51%
Just	16	45%
Here	10	24%
Even	8	18%
Now	7	15%
All	6	12%
Back	6	12%
Too	5	9%

always	5	9%
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It is observed that female suicide notes depict more expressions and explanation as they use more adjectives and adverbs are compared to men.

#### 4.1.5 Use of Pronouns in Male and Female Suicide Notes

The results for the use of pronouns in male suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 9:** Use of ‘Pronouns’ in Male Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
I	216	86%
My	72	95%
You	68	78%
Me	54	70%
It	24	43%
He	8	16%
Your	8	22%
They	8	19%
myself	8	19%

Males tend to use pronouns as ‘I’ (86%) and ‘my’ (95%) the most which denote their sense of possession. The use of ‘Me’ (70%) indicates that in most of their writings, they talk about themselves.

The results for the use of pronouns in male suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 10:** Use of ‘Pronouns’ in Female Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
I	313	100%
You	153	94%
Me	69	90%
My	68	85%
Your	35	64%
It	31	54%
myself	12	36%
He	7	21%
Him	6	18%

Them	5	15%
Her	5	12%

Where the study of Lenard (2016) concluded that women use less first-person pronoun 'I' as compared to men. the study of Shapero (2011) discussed that 82.43% of female suicide notes used first-person pronoun 'I' whereas, 83.02% of males used it in their suicide notes. It was surprising to see that when compared to the discourse of men, women used more first-person pronoun 'I' (100%) in their writings. The characteristic which is very different from other forms of writings.

#### 4.1.6 Use of Conjunctions in Male and Female Suicide Notes

The results for the use of conjunctions in male suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 11:** Use of 'Conjunctions' in Male Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
And	79	81%
But	27	51%

It is observed that males use less conjunctions in their suicide notes and keep sentences precise and small.

The results for the use of conjunctions in female suicide notes are as follows:

**Table 12:** Use of 'Conjunctions' in Female Suicide Notes

Item	Freq	Percentage
And	108	97%
But	40	88%
Or	7	21%
Both	6	18%

It is observed that females use more conjunctions in their sentences hence, their suicide notes have complex sentence structures. This also denotes sense of expression and explanation in their discourse.

#### 4.1.7 Discussion on the Lexical Features in Suicide Notes

Gregory (1999) observed that individuals writing suicide notes use more nouns and verbs in their notes. In another study, Jones and Benell (2007) came up with the same observation. It was explained that a person who is going to commit suicide is under a higher drive hence, is more likely to refer to a large number of objects (nouns). In this study, it was also noted that the notes contained greater number of nouns and verbs as compared to the other lexical categories. Majority of the nouns used in male suicide notes discussed about 'life' (84%) and 'world' (51%) with worries of 'time' (30%), 'family' (38%) and 'money' (97%). Whereas, female suicide notes usually revolve around 'life' (100%) with worries of 'family' (53%), 'decision' (27%), 'people' (27%) and 'dreams' (94%). They generally talk about their previous 'days' (42%) and how their 'heart' (19%) had been in 'pain' (80%).

The male suicide notes mostly discuss about what they've 'done' (67%) and the things they 'have' (97%) had. They talk about the times they 'tried' (51%) to make things better and what they actually 'wanted' (38%) in life. They 'tell' (43%) the untold and 'request' (46%) for the things they want when they would no more be there. In contrast, the verbs used in female suicide notes depict that generally, in their suicide notes, they talk about what they 'wanted' (97%) from life and how much they 'tried' (79%) to get it. They discuss their emotional state by discussing how certain events and situations 'made' (64%) them 'feel' (85%) and how they wanted to 'live' (45%) but the 'dreams' (79%) were not made true and how 'hurt' (73%) they felt in life afterwards which led them to take this step. It was also noted that females are often snubbed, unheard and forced to make decisions in life as per the requirements of the masses who head them. Through the suicide notes, they discuss marriage and the kind of person they wanted to 'marry' (33%). A lot of note writers 'apologized' (44%) for their deeds which were considered wrong and for disobeying the decisions made by their elders.

It was also noticed that females use more adjectives and adverbs as compared to men. This denotes that female are more elaborative in their writings and convey the message with more explanation. The adjective 'sorry' was used the most by females (97%) as compared with men (32%). This predicts that due to social pressure, females are more prone to hiding their emotions. The societal pressure forces them to do what others want them to instead of what they themselves want to do in lives. This situation

ultimately results in hopelessness and weakness of personality which becomes evident in their writing.

Lenard (2016) in a study concluded that women use less first-person pronoun 'I' as compared to men. They use 'I' to generally report an incident or experience putting emphasis on the event or the experience whereas, men use 'I' emphasizing their role and importance in the event. The study of Shapero (2011) discussed that 82.43% of female suicide notes used first-person pronoun 'I' whereas, 83.02% of males used it in their suicide notes. It was surprising to see that when compared to the discourse of men, women used more first-person pronoun in their suicide notes. In 86% of male suicide notes, 'I' was noticed whereas, 100% of female suicide notes included the first-person pronoun 'I'. Weintraub (2003) and Hermann (2003), in a study, noted that individuals who tend to use more singular first-person pronouns than plural first-person pronouns actually want to set themselves apart by standing out as individuals to mark identity instead of being the part of a group. They view this use as a demonstration of individuality which is a powerful trait. Living in a male patriarchal society where women are pressurized to stay quiet and not talk about themselves, suicide notes is a genre where the inbuilt frustration vomits out without the fear of consequences. Hence, a change in the use of first-person pronoun 'I' is evident.

While analysing the use of conjunctions in male and female suicide notes, it is noted that females use more conjunctions as compared to men. As discussed earlier that gender female use prolonged and complicated sentences which makes the sentence structure more detailed and elaborative. As a result, they automatically end up using more conjunctions in their sentences.

## **4.2 Aspects of language in Male and Female Suicide Notes depicting features of Interpersonal Theory of Suicide**

According to the Interpersonal Theory of Suicide presented by Joiner. T (2005) which was further expanded by Orden and colleagues (2010), the desire to end one's own life and leave the world is related to the simultaneous presence of two interpersonal factors. Thwarted belongingness and Perceived burdensomeness. 'Suicidal desire emerges when individuals experience intractable feelings of perceived burdensome and thwarted belongingness and that near-lethal or lethal suicidal behaviour occurs in the presence of suicidal desire and capability for suicide' (Chu, 2017).



Thwarted belongingness further includes two measures; loneliness and the lack of reciprocal care from the community. Perceived burdensome further includes the belief that one is incapable or deficient as to represent a burden or responsibility and the emotionally charged cognition of hatred towards oneself.

#### **4.2.1 Aspects of language in Male Suicide Notes depicting features of Interpersonal Theory of Suicide**

According to the analysis of Male suicide notes, 19 out of 37 (51.35%) suicide note writers depicted features of 'Thwarted Belongingness'. Thwarted belongingness refers to low sense of belonging. It is the feeling of loneliness and social alienation. One feels that he does not belong to the valued groups, peers and family. The phrases and sentences depicting 'thwarted belongingness' in male suicide notes used words as 'disenchanted', 'lost', 'lonely', 'alone', 'alien' to depict that they feel 'suffocated', 'unaccepted' and 'numb'. They feel 'darkness' all around them and want to 'escape' to feel better.

The phrases and sentences depicting 'Thwarted Belongingness are stated below:

- Since you have decided to part ways with me then what's the point of living.
- I thought getting education would do suffice to life but I was wrong.
- I feel disenchanted with this world.
- I just suffocate in my room.
- I thought I could go on without you. But I can't
- He also had the right to be accepted and loved. He too had big dreams but just different.
- So again, I feel numb, my body shivers in the darkness of my own shadows accompanied by the non-ending lonely nights I can't escape.
- I don't want to go to the hostel.
- I am committing suicide to avoid humiliation, being handcuffed and paraded in front of the media.
- I tried to lead a life without thinking of you but each time I found myself lost.
- I leave this matter in the court of Allah.

- The system of Bahria university is totally corrupt and Bahria university is responsible for the whole thing.
- I hold no proofs to save my dignity.
- There are these terrible nights where I'm lost and each time I want to be found.
- I don't feel normal and there are moments when I feel an alien in front of people around me.
- I feel suffocated here as if I'm strangled to death.
- ..... and just keep thinking how u left me alone.
- I wish I could ignore you like you do but I just can't.
- Now that I've seen you growing, I can die in peace in the hopes that you'll raise our children to become good human beings.

23 out of 37 (72.97%) suicide note writers depicted features of 'Perceived Burdensome'. Perceived Burdensome is a feeling of self-hate due to the burden from the society where the person exists. The burden could either be of unemployment, inability to cope situations, financial crisis, incarceration, medical problems etc. The phrases and sentences depicting 'perceived burdensome' in male suicide notes used words as 'disappointing' others where the efforts went in 'vain'. The writers generally are hopeless and talk about other people's 'expectations' from them which went unfilled. They mention their reasons for 'burden' and state their inability to come up to the expectations by the use of 'tried' and '-not's' as 'couldn't', 'can't', 'didn't' and 'wasn't'.

The phrases and sentences depicting Perceived Burdensome are stated below:

- All I've ever done is to disappoint you and I don't see any reason for myself to continue now because all my efforts have been in vain.
- This result has completely taken my will to live.
- I am mentally sick and I cannot get the cure of it.
- I see in the mirror and find myself as disappointment. I am good for nothing.
- I'm sorry that I didn't reach up to your expectations and I'm sorry for being a disappointment for you.
- This world would never stop worrying.

- I can't arrange rent, food, medication for my family. Therefore, I've decided that I am going to commit suicide on 10<sup>th</sup> January on my birth date.
- I lost my reason to live.
- I am sorry but I couldn't make it.
- I can't visualize my stance in even my own life.
- I tried being good enough.
- My life has become a joke
- Ever experienced what it feels when you're trying to be perfect for everyone yet you are a loser, a lifeless loser who can't get anything right.
- I am mentally worried.
- I'm sorry for breaking the promise and not coming up to your expectations Baba.
- I wasn't able to keep balance between a mother and a wife.
- My result didn't come out good even though I tried and did my level best.
- There is no life without money.
- It took me years to get an engineering degree but still facing unemployment for 5 years.
- I am unable to hold the pressure anymore.
- I tried my best to stay because you asked me to stay.
- Sorry for creating mess in your lives too.
- This divorce has taken my will to live.

It was also noted that 7 out of 37 (18.91%) suicide notes depicted both features of 'Thwarted Belongingness' as well as 'Perceived Burdensome'

#### **4.2.2 Aspects of language in Female Suicide Notes depicting features of Interpersonal Theory of Suicide**

According to the analysis of Female suicide notes, 17 out of 33 (51.51%) suicide note writers depicted features of 'Thwarted Belongingness'. The suicide notes stated words as 'broken', 'suffocated' and 'dead' to mention their lack of belongingness to this world. They feel 'worthless', 'miserable' in the world where they could no longer 'relive' as they see 'darkness' everywhere.

The phrases and sentences depicting ‘thwarted belongingness’ are stated below:

- I feel suffocated and dead.
- Every day I woke up and felt more broken.
- I don’t consider you responsible for anything but I pray that may you learn treating your other children as humans and not dummies.
- I don’t want to live in this world which is full of lies, deceits, heartbreaks and sufferings.
- I never belonged here.
- I know that there isn’t a single person who would get affected with this decision of mine and I know that this life would be happier place for you after me.
- I was never meant for here.
- I was always told that being a girl isn’t easy and I never understood it until a few days back.
- You were the one who out of your complexities, made me believe how wisdom less, worthless and miserable I was.
- All I wanted was time and all I wanted was love.
- I’ve nothing good inside that would push me to stay.
- I won’t relive.
- I tried to fit in with the people around.
- I don’t belong to this world.
- I’ve learnt how hard and painful it is living without your husband.
- Darkness is what surrounds me every moment.
- I cannot live alone.

27 out of 33 (69.69%) suicide note writers depicted features of ‘Perceived Burdensome’. The suicide notes stated words as ‘burden’, ‘tried’ and ‘tired’ to show their ‘inability’ to reach up to others expectations which went unfilled. They talk about ‘failure’ and the number of times they ‘tried’ to succeed and tackle situations. They talk about the things they ‘could not’ do and the pain which came along causing a great impact on their lives and wellbeing.

The phrases and sentences depicting ‘perceived burdensome’ are stated below:

- The world is becoming a burden for me.
- I always tried to reach up to the requirements of my friends and family.
- I am unable to trust any relation. I am unable to get along easily.
- I no more could take this.
- I tried through every mean to prove myself right but failed.
- I'm unable to justify things to you every time.
- I failed to do anything of my own here in this world.
- I no more could hide things for your reputation.
- I'm just leaving because I am not allowed to make my own decisions.
- I promised myself to lead a happy, normal life but I was unable to do it.
- I am unable to get hold of it.
- I have no strength to bear it.
- You want me to relive life but you are hiding the fact that there is no place for somebody who is abandoned by her husband.
- I am tired of hearing this all the time.
- I refused to become a conventional girl.
- I could not marry him.
- My family think I'm a curse for them and a hurdle for my other sibling's happiness.
- I don't have a heart as big which would accept the decision that you made.
- These months had been the worst of all.
- Failure is what had always been my fate.
- I no more have the courage to endure the pain now.
- Sorry but I cannot handle the burden.
- I am tired of fulfilling the roles you want me to fulfil.
- I was forced to do what they wanted me to do.
- I don't deserve to stay somewhere where I am compelled to live how others want me to.
- He is the father to them and should be responsible for their upbringing.
- I can't be a source of shame and discomfort for my family.

It was also noted that 12 out of 33 suicide notes depicted both features of ‘Thwarted Belongingness’ as well as ‘Perceived Burdensome’.

#### **4.2.3 Discussion on the features of ‘Interpersonal Theory of Suicide’ in Pakistani Suicide Notes**

The study by Cabana et.al (2015), in the region of Chile, stated that one or more characteristics of interpersonal theory of suicide were observed in 60% of the suicide notes where ‘lack of belonging/ Thwarted Belongingness’ was the basic factor found in majority of the notes. The rest of the notes did mention the emotive tone but the characteristics of interpersonal theory of suicide were not present in all of the suicide notes. In contrast to it, all of the Pakistani suicide notes, under study, contained either one or both characteristics of the interpersonal theory of suicide. It is observed that 72.97% of male suicide notes had the characteristics of ‘Perceived Burdensome’. 51.35% of the male notes had the characteristics of Thwarted Belongingness’ whereas, 18.91% of male suicide notes depicted the characteristics of both features. As per the analysis of female suicide notes, 69.69% of female suicide notes had the characteristics of ‘Perceived Burdensome’. 51.51% of the female notes had the characteristics of Thwarted Belongingness’ whereas, 36.36% of female suicide notes depicted the characteristics of both features. Features of ‘Perceived Burdensome’ were more common in suicide notes of both genders with ‘Perceived Burdensome’ being highest in males due to the view that they’re marked as the sole bread winners of the society and have to deal with more pressure.

The result and discussion infer that the emotional state and feelings of the individuals performing suicide may vary with the difference in region, social issues and environment. It is also observed that Pakistani suicide notes are considerably emotive and vocal with evident features depicting the interpersonal theory of suicide as compared to the suicide notes of the western world.

#### **4.3 Prevailing Social Issues and Inferences with respect to Relevance Theory**

Relevance Theory, as defined by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: Ch. 3) explains two general notions: ‘relevance in a context’ and ‘relevance to an individual’. A context comprises mentally represented information of any type – beliefs, doubts,

hopes, wishes, plans, goals, intentions, questions, etc and is constructed in the course of the comprehension process from a range of potential contexts available to the individual. The aim is to define relevance and perform textual analysis not only for communicative acts, but for any external stimulus or internal mental representation which can provide an input to cognitive processes. This way, not only utterances but thoughts, memories or conclusions of inferences may all provide potentially relevant inputs. The analysis would therefore, provide an insight towards the thinking of individuals through their use of words and would highlight some major prevailing issues of the Pakistani society which are leading individuals to suicide.

Suicide notes are analysed based on appropriate inferences and predictions with regards to the variables in order to bring light upon the major issues being faced by the society in Pakistan which leads them to opt for suicide.

#### **4.3.1 Analysis of Male suicide notes**

M1

The suicide note is not directly referring to anyone but it seems that he is referring to a very close relation who marks great importance to him as he says ‘All I’ve ever done is to disappoint you’. Disappointing the loved one is the major reason for suicide because the happiness of his loved one meant everything to him and he tried a lot of times to reach up to the desired expectations but always failed. He mentions his disappointment from himself through the sentence, ‘I don’t see any reason for myself to continue now because all my efforts have been in vain’. He apologizes for not reaching up to their expectations. These expectations could be financial, ethical or emotional as inferred from ‘I couldn’t be what you wanted me to be’. It is also evident from the note that the victim was not living the life of his choice. He was struggling to reach up to the expectations of his loved ones hence, was more focused in making them happier instead of his own self. The note depicts that the victim was unable to reach the expectations of his close relations which led him to suicide.

M2

The note writer starts off with the mention of his name and CNIC. This predicts that the victim performed suicide in an area where his identification could have been difficult. This also infers that the mental condition of the suicide note writer was stable

as he could recall minor details in view. The victim doesn't blame anyone for his deed and mentions that he has performed suicide out of his own will. He mentions 'I am committing suicide by my fault. No depression, no pressure'. He apologizes his parents and teachers for committing such act and requests the authorities to do not touch his body for investigation and legal procedures. This might be due to the fact that suicide is a deed which is greatly stigmatized in Pakistan. The victim is aware of the consequences which his family has to face hence, he doesn't want them to be blamed for anything. He asks the doctors not to save him by mentioning 'I'm requesting the doctor please don't save my life because if I survive, I'll commit suicide again'. This predicts that the suicide note writer has no hopes of getting back to life hence, he has completely made up his mind to end the chapter of life. The writer doesn't mention the reason for suicide anywhere but 'if I survive, I'll commit suicide again' emphasises on his hopelessness and discouragement from living a life.

### M3

The note doesn't refer to anyone. This predicts that the person is not actually attached with anyone or maybe he is angry at most of his close relations. The victim ends the note in one line mentioning that he isn't mentally stable and not able to get his disease cured. He states 'I am mentally sick and I cannot get the cure of it that's why I'm ending my life'. The statement provides three different predictions. One is that the victim was either diagnosed with a mental disorder which was incurable that badly affected his state of living. The other one might be that the victim knew that he needed professional help but wasn't able to get it due to financial crisis or social stigma. Another explanation which could be inferred from this statement could be that the victim called himself 'mentally sick' because he wasn't able to think just like the collective social mind and is unable to cure his thinking in that regard. The predictions therefore infer that the victim wasn't able to own his thoughts which were different from the social circle. He, unable to cure his thoughts, attempted or intended to attempt for suicide.

### M4

The note doesn't refer to anyone. There isn't a greeting or an ending farewell. It seems as if the note writer had no close relationship to talk to or that he did not consider having an interaction with any of them. It can also be inferred that the victim



was running short of time thus he did not want to waste time on writing something extra. The writer requests the corpse holder to donate his body parts. He says ‘Donate my body parts. I’m young and smile’. This may infer that the writer wants to be of some use for the mankind when he leaves the world. Analysing the statement and the fact that there isn’t any greeting mentioned, it is predicted that nobody was connected or close to enough to the victim who would be affected by him performing this deed. Thus, donating his body parts seemed appropriate to the writer. His decision of donating his body parts predict that he had a softer heart and was ready to serve the mankind but the world did not really welcome him nicely. Though the reason for suicide is not explicitly mentioned, the analysis of the note predicts that the feeling of being ‘lonely’ can be the basic reason for suicide.

#### M5

The mentioned suicide note is rather a general statement without any starting and closing mentions. The statement predicts that the victim wasn’t treated well by the said society and ended up giving him stress, grief and worrisome situations which he was not able to tackle. In accordance with his views, the world is never satisfied with what it already has. Every person in the society wants to gain more and more thus end up being stressed and pressurized. The victim gives up on the idea of struggling to gain every time. He gives up on life knowing that the world won’t change thus he doesn’t seem quite fit for the world. The statement, ‘This world would never stop worrying, I think I should’ predicts that the victim was overdosed with stress and anxiety and he couldn’t take things anymore. He also had a self-realization that since the world won’t stop worrying, the only way to exclude stress is leaving this life.

#### M6

The suicide note is posted on his social media account referring to his friends. He mentions that this would be his last activity on his account as he has completely made his mind for suicide. The sentence structure and the choice of words predict that the note writer was not very well-educated hence, improper structures are vividly observed. The victim explicitly mentions his reason for suicide. He says’ Due to poverty and joblessness since a long time, I can’t survive anymore with my family. I can’t arrange rent, food, medication for my family’. The provided discourse infers that the set necessities of life, which are incorporated within us by the society, were not

sufficient enough due to which he attempted suicide. He seeks forgiveness from his friends and ask them to pray for him and his family. The note ends with ‘Good Bye forever. Please pray for my little children’. The adjustment of the sentence ‘Please pray for my little children’ after the set ending phrases highlights the hassle in the mind of writer. It also suggests that the victim was very concerned about his little children who were suffering. It is, therefore, evident from the note that the victim attempted suicide due to inability to cope up with basic requirements of living and joblessness was the reason behind it.

#### M7

This note doesn’t directly refer to a specific person but the way it is written, shows that the suicide note solely concerns a single person which might be his beloved. The victim talks about the biggest fear of his life which was to lose his beloved. Since the beloved has moved on in life and doesn’t need him now, the victim feels all broken and dejected. He mentions ‘Since you’ve decided to part ways with me then what’s the point of living in a world without you because I’ve had my whole in you’. The statement predicts that the victim was very close with the person he is mentioning and that he has lost all hopes to live without his beloved. It is evident from the statement that the victim was unable to hold onto things anymore therefore, detachment from his beloved has led the victim to perform suicide.

#### M8

The note addresses the victim’s parents and mentions how disappointed he feels from his life and how bad experiences affected his thinking pattern. The suicide note writer had been disappointed from his life throughout and the only time when he felt a little productive and happier was when he was struggling for a career. The statement ‘The only period worthy of living was when I thought to flourish, gain respect through a career that you wanted me to get into and make you proud’ depicts a confession from the writer. The use of ‘only’ represents the sole or single time in life when he felt a little hopeful about himself in life. The analysis of the discourse also infers that the victim had no control over his own life decisions therefore, all the major decisions in his life were made by his family members specifically parents. The career that he opted for was also chosen considering the sole interest of his parents instead of his own will and spending life as per his will and interests never really crossed his mind or might not be

his priority. Inability to come up to their desired expectations lead him to hopelessness and disappointment. The statement, 'I'm sorry but I couldn't make it' infers that the said victim was very passionate about making the dream of his family come true. He tried his level best but wasn't able to reach the desired level thus resulted in ending his life.

M9

The said suicide note doesn't refer to anyone nor provide any specific message. The note is a general perception about the world which affected the victim and lead him to take his life. He mentions that being well educated and representable academically isn't enough to change life and be content. The statement, 'Knowing how to be deceitful and cunning do the honours' predicts that the victim was academically strong and stable but got victimized at the hands of cunning, deceitful, mendacious and devious people. Upon analysing the discourse, it is predicted that the said victim belonged to a respectable, educated family with a bright academic career. The only characteristic that he lacked was being tactful which led him towards immense disappointment and dismay. The suicide note written by the said victim also predicts that he lost faith in people due to encountering betrayal on the hands of disloyal people.

M10

The suicide note under discussion does not refer to any specific person. It starts off with discussing one of the major drawbacks of the victim's life who was getting professional education for engineering. The statement 'Ever since I joined engineering college, I feel disenchanted with this world' predicts that the victims did not feel satisfied with what he was doing and he regrets his decision for choosing engineering. The statement also infers that the suicide note writer feels disconnected with his surroundings and the social circle. Due to his tough academic routine and burden, he is unable to get along with his peers, family or people related to him and ends up feeling lonely. The statement 'Every moment is going so worse that trust to this world is just lost' infers that the victim faced disloyalty and betrayal at the hands of people due to which he doesn't feel interested to live anymore. Knowing that suicide has serious punishment in the life hereafter in Islam, the victim still choses to end this life and says that making up to those punishments would be easier than staying here and punishing yourself every day.

M11

The said suicide note looks like being written to his own self mentioning the feelings that he encounters every now and then. The statement 'my body shivers in the darkness of my own shadows accompanied by the non-ending lonely nights I can't escape' infers that victim rethinks about all the dark sides of his life every night which affects his mental condition badly. His mind gets filled with the past bitter experiences and the thoughts get hold of him completely and even when he tries to get out of the memory lane, he feels helpless. The analysis of his discourse predicts that his mind is solely filled with glee and he doesn't feel homely in this place. He uses words as shadows, escape, anxiety, sadness and bittersweet toxins to express his condition. The basic reason for feeling this way isn't mentioned but it seems as if the victim faced a serious loss or tragedy that led him to disappointment. The victim clearly states that he doesn't feel like belonging to this world and predicts that there is some other place where he would be happier. By the 'other place' he refers to the life after death where he predicts would be a better place and homely as he calls it with words as 'new home' and 'new journey'.

M12

The said suicide note doesn't refer to anyone at specific and talks about the general state of mind and the things the victim wants to be done after his suicide. The statement 'I always felt like I didn't have a mouth or a voice' depicts an exaggerated thought. The statement predicts that the victim tried to say ample of things at several points in life but did not have the guts to speak up. The statement also infers that nobody considered whatever the victim tried to think, say or plan for himself. He thus had to abide by the collective societal rules or the ones imposed by his relationships. The victim tried several times to be able to meet up the societal expectations but failed. He apologises for not being able to become the one they wanted him to be. He mentions that he tried his utmost best but failed each time and that he was helpless. He apologized to people to whom his death would affect and gave genuine appreciation to the ones who tried cheering him up through his dark days and states that they were the only mild ray of hope that pushed him to live so far. He mentions 'Bury me in black. Donate my eyes. I wish they glimmer with hope and taste life through someone's vision'. The statement depicts total hopelessness and misery. The victim desires to be buried in black

which itself is the colour of misery, hopelessness, dejection and death. He presents the wish that his eyes be donated so that they could be able to see happiness which he desired for himself to see. The statement 'I wish there was another day. I really do' presents the author's inability to fulfil expectations and his sense of failure. The statement also infers that the author didn't count the days he spent as 'real days' rather they were filled with darkness and glee and were metaphorically nights. The victim ends the note by thanking his loved ones for contributing in his life impacting it whether good or bad. The note predicts that inability to reach up to the expectations of people, hopelessness and helplessness were the major reasons for suicide.

### M13

The suicide note has used words as 'trapped' and 'suffocate' to mention his state of being and vivid thoughts. The statement 'wanting to rip my wrist off and wanting the blood to drench so slow so I can feel the pain in each drop until my soul leaves the body' indicates exaggerated thoughts which infers that the victim was in the practice of hurting himself physically. The statement also depicts that the suicide note writer had undergone some serious mental issues where he feels pleasure in pain. The note also mentions that the victim stays up till very late at night which strengthens the prediction that he had some untreated psychological disorder. The statements 'Ever experienced what it feels when you're trying to be perfect for everyone yet you are a loser, a lifeless loser who can't get anything right. A paranoid who ruins every situation' infers that the person is highly stressed yet has to depict himself as somebody very strong due to him being the bread winner. This also predicts that due to societal pressure and expectations from male gender, man is unable to vent out his emotions and is supposed to do everything at right. He is expected to be headstrong and a role model for the rest of the family. The victim mentions that he has lost all his strength and bravery and is sick of pretending okay. Now the only courage that is left within him is to strangle himself to death to get freed. The writer does not depict an explicit reason for suicide but it is inferred that hopelessness, stress and inability to cope with situations forced him towards suicide.

### M14

The said suicide note is a single statement which says 'I am mentally worried that's why committing suicide'. The statement predicts that the victim had been under

pressure and stress over a very long span of time due to which he lost his mental capacity to think in the right direction or make a fruitful decision for himself. The statement also predicts that the writer was well aware of his mental state but was unable or did not choose to get treated. Untreated mental issues and stress are inferred as the basic reasons for suicide.

M15

The letter refers to his mother. The writer says that by the time his mother would get the note, he would be no more. He requests his mother to visit his school and get his belongings from there specially 'the box'. The note predicts that the suicide note writer is a school attending child who probably had put something important in the box that he wants his mother to see. The writer also puts up the reason behind his suicide. He says, 'I am killing myself because I don't want to go to the hostel and when I will be gone, don't come and cry on my grave'. The statement infers that the child wasn't happy with the idea of his parents putting him into a hostel. This can have two possible reasons. First, that the child was very attached with his present school environment and wasn't able to grasp the thought of leaving the environment. The other reason might be that the child felt lost, leftover and isolated by this decision of his parents. This could be inferred from the fact that the child requests his mother not to send his siblings to hostel and to keep them closer. The child is well aware that his family would mourn when he would leave hence, requests them not to cry over the loss. The statement 'There is a diary inside my cupboard, please read it' predicts that the child had a lot to say before committing suicide but wasn't able to depict his emotions thus, generation gap is being observed between the mother and her child. A friendlier relationship would have prevented the child from suicide.

M16

The suicide letter is referred to the Chief Justice of Pakistan mentioning the true picture of the issue which lead him towards suicide. He says that a case got filed on him by the NAB in the case of the restoration of a plot which wasn't really restored by him but by the chairman. He further mentions how the case made his life miserable and despondent. His case was placed in ECL by the interior ministry under a FIR where he was never nominated. He provides attached statements to each case in order to provide for his innocence. The statement 'I am committing suicide to avoid humiliation, being

handcuffed and paraded in front of the media' depicts that his act of suicide was a response to his unheard story and the fear of embarrassment. Having lived a life of reputation throughout the years, he feared humiliation and opprobrium due to which he decided to take the step. The statement 'I request you, the honourable Chief Justice, to take notice of NAB's officials conduct so that other government officials are not convicted for the crimes they had not committed' infers that the victim had no voice to speak about his issues and justify his stance when he was alive. This also puts light upon the fact that a person has to go through tremendous filters and processes to reach higher authority to be heard. A person, when alive, isn't been listened for even such serious matters where a person is on the verge of life and death. The statement 'I'm giving my life in the hope that you the honourable Chief Justice will bring positive changes in the system where incompetent people are playing with the life and honour of citizen in the name of accountability' depicts the ignorance of Chief Justice in the sector where incompetent people are given the card to make decisions without anyone heading them. This also brings light to the authoritative systems being corrupt and unprofessional. the note clearly depicts the reason for suicide as humiliation over false accusation.

M17

The note is referred to his father and depicts two major things of his life, failing and breaking trust. The note explains that the son commits suicide because he broke his father's trust and failed the exam. The statement 'I'm sorry for breaking the promise and not coming up to your expectations Baba' draws our attention to one of the important issues that has started occurring the society. Parents, at times, burden children under their expectations so much that they don't exactly realize how much it affects the mental wellbeing of the child. Despite looking into the calibre and abilities of the child, they push their child to excel in the field accepted by the collective social mind even when it isn't meant for him to excel. Stressing over not getting the expected grades then leads to suicide.

M18

The suicide note is written by a man who lost his loved one which is predicted to be his spouse who marked a devastating impact on the victim. He depicts how his life always revolved around that one and only person and how he dreamt of spending

the rest of his years with her. The statements ‘I tried my best to stay because you asked me to stay. I tried to lead a life without thinking of you but each time I found myself lost’ mention how helpless and restless the victim used to feel. His inability to cope up the loss and ‘feeling lost’ compelled him to suicide. The victim ends the note apologizing to his parents and telling them that it wasn’t an easy ride in life for him and he had to leave.

#### M19

The suicide note refers to his family members and states that he took the step of taking his life in his complete senses and by his will. The statements ‘My life has become a joke. I never got the opportunity to learn from life and when I got the chance, I am dead from inside’ infers sense of hopelessness and late self-realization. This also predicts that the victim had been irresponsible and unserious in whatever that he had been doing in life. He spent his years in mere carelessness and negligence and when he realized the mistake on his part, he was torn and devastated from inside without any more hopes and expectations. The statement ‘I don’t know if the things I am writing would even be understood by anyone or not’ infers chaos and vivid thoughts inside his mind. This also infers a streak of different thoughts which locked and clumped his mind. The victim’s inability to cope with his negative thoughts and regret over wasting time in life led him towards suicide.

#### M20

The suicide note is a one liner statement which predicts that either the victim suicided outside his home or he had very less time to suicide. The statement ‘I leave this matter in the court of Allah. The police are requested not to investigate and bother anyone’ infers that the victim had been either accused of something or had been maligned or wrongly treated due to which he decided to suicide.

#### M21

The note is referred to his parents mentioning how hard he tried to reach up to their expectations but he couldn’t. the statements ‘I’m sorry that I didn’t reach up to your expectations and I’m sorry for being a disappointment for you. Please forgive me’ state sense of helplessness from the victim’s part. It also depicts the child’s fear of resentment from his parents and his inability to cope with the situation. Embarrassment,



pressure to make his parents happy and inability to come up to their expectations led the victim to suicide.

#### M22

The suicide note is written by a student of Bahria University who mentions that the society rather should not blame his family but the university. The statement ‘The system of Bahria university is totally corrupt and Bahria university is responsible for the whole thing’ depicts that the victim was mistreated under the hands of authorities and his voice was left unheard. This draws attention towards the unprofessional authority who maligns the confidence of students and instead of solving and hearing the issues, end up bashing or breaking their personality. Mistreatment by the university management and unsolved issues resulted in the suicide of the victim.

#### M23

The suicide note addresses the man’s mother and wife who affected his mental peace. He states how unfortunate he was as he was unable to maintain balance between his mother and wife. The statements ‘I thought I was a brilliant son until I got married and my world turned upside down. I thought I had a good power of making decisions until I faced my life ripped down into two plates infers his helplessness, hopelessness and resentment in the case. The clause ‘I thought I was’ suggests how confused and uncertain the situations have made him that he has started questioning his own self if he’s even good enough. The statement ‘I won’t be here but I’m leaving things behind which I assume would be sufficient enough for you two’ infers that the major rivalry between his mother and wife was for material things as money. The clause ‘I assume’, again, suggests uncertainty of his thoughts and decisions. Loss of peace at home led the victim towards suicide.

#### M24

The suicide note is referred to his parents. On analysing the note, it seems more like an apology note. The child apologises to his parents for not getting good grades. The statements ‘I’m sorry for defaming and disrespecting you. I know you’ll face a lot of embarrassment because of me but believe me, I did my best’ draws attention to the bitter reality of our society where children are being burdened to get good grades or else, they won’t be accepted. This also highlights the fear of the child that his parents

would face embarrassment and humiliation on the hands of the society for which the child tried his best but couldn't compete enough. Inability to get good grades and fear of being humiliated led the victim to suicide.

M25

The suicide note mentions how material things are important to have in this world. The statement 'I tried best but still I couldn't convince myself to live, its me who's responsible for my death,, there is no life without money. don't investigate' indicates that the victim gave several thoughts before committing suicide but couldn't see a ray of hope to survive. The use of punctuation marks and sentence structure depicts that the victim belonged to a mediocre family background who struggled to survive in the society. This brings our attention to the major issue any society faces; lack of money.

M26

The note is written by a man who did a degree in engineering in the hope of a brighter future but encountered unemployment for five years despite working days and nights and looking here and there for a reasonable job. The statement 'this life has already proved to be a hell where my hard work is wasted' depicts that the victim struggled hard to get the degree but since he stayed unemployed, the life was made devastating for him. His inability to get a suitable job despite working hard throughout the tenure to get a professional degree led him to hopelessness and became a reason for suicide.

M27

The note was written by a man who was accused of molesting a girl over an old fight. The statement 'I hold no proofs to save my dignity. I am innocent, I did not commit such grave sin' infers that the victim committed suicide in order to save his reputation. Because he had no major proofs to speak for himself and prove his innocence, he chose to die instead of living a life where he would be maligned over a sin that he did not commit.

MM1

The suicide note depicts sense of depression and numbness at the part of victim who uses words and phrases as 'I'm lost and each time I want to be found', 'stare at the ceiling for hours', 'I try to get up' and 'but I end up being suffocated' to mention his state of mind and the way he feels. This also implies that the victim had been under stress and depression for a longer period of time. The statement 'They don't get what I feel or say. They don't actually even feel how I feel' infers that the victim was unable to relate himself with other people around him and found no ultimate connection with them due to which he felt alone and unwanted. Through the analysis of the note, it is inferred that the feeling of loneliness and loss of focussed path led the victim to suicide.

#### MM2

The victim makes his parents recall how he came earlier to their lives when the night was 'dark' 'stormy' and 'thundering'. He mentions how he was the only child to his parents' who was pampered way beyond due to which he did not feel connected to people around him. The statements 'I don't feel normal and there are moments when I feel an alien in front of people around me who tells me about the struggles and problems, the sadness and tragedies. I feel like I don't reside here but somewhere else' predicts his life to be all glitters and shiny due to which he was unable to relate to real world's issues and seems like he doesn't belong here. Just as he came earlier, he states, he left earlier as well. The note did not explicitly present the victim's reason for suicide but it is inferred that his inability to relate to life the way other people around him used to do and the feeling of being alone led him to suicide.

#### MM3

In the note written by the victim, he mentions how hard he had been trying to achieve good. The statement 'I tried to get grades considered 'good' in your books. I tried to get the job which you desired for me. I tried to afford the lifestyle which you wanted for me. I tried but I failed' depicts the constant pressure with which the victim had been spending his life. The constant use of 'You' also highlights the eminent role others played in his life which did not allow him to survive the way he wanted to. In order to achieve goals being set by his loved ones, he tried till the very last but did not succeed. The statement 'I'm sorry for being a worthless son, a lazy brother and a mismatched husband' depicts his helplessness and hopelessness from himself and the situation.

## MM4

The victim uses negative words and phrases as 'messed up', 'dull', 'suffocated', 'strangled', 'lifeless', 'unworthy', 'dejected' and 'disappointment' to depict how his inner self feels like. The statements of apology in 'I am good for nothing. I'm sorry for not becoming what you dreamt for me. I gave my best to this world. I am just so sorry' infers the amount of struggle and hard work the victim had put in to reach up to their said expectations but the inability to do so forced him to take his own life.

## MM5

The suicide note is written by a son to his parents mentioning how his desires were pushed forward under their own expectations from him. The statement 'Your son was not dumb, irresponsible, uninterested, immature, unfocussed, mischievous, unbothered, negative, trackless and worthless. He was just different. He came with his aims too' mentions how parents, sometimes, pressurize their children to fulfil their dreams forgetting they are individuals with certain ambitions of their own as well.

## MM6

The note is written by a person whose marriage did not work out. The statements 'I wish I could ignore you like you do but I just can't. This divorce has taken my will to live' infers that the victim was disregarded by his spouse. This also raises a point that in a society where women are regarded to mourn a failed marriage and where men are majorly taken as strong and rigid, men also go through emotional trauma and requires help.

## MM7

The suicide note refers to somebody particular but the relationship isn't well defined in the writing. It seems as it was written for his spouse. The statement 'I thought I could go on without you. But I can't, so this is for you. I love you' infers that the victim had been trying on and off to make things work out but since it didn't work out, he was unable to forget or move on from the past.

## MM8

The suicide note is written for his beloved in the bittersweet memories of whom, he spent his time. The statement 'I'm always in my memories of u and just keep thinking

how u left me alone' infers that they both weren't together due to differences, fight, misunderstanding or death. The victim, hence, depicts inability to move on which led him to suicide.

MM9

The suicide note is written by a medical college student who mentions how becoming a doctor had been his dream since the beginning. The statement 'This result has completely taken my will to live' infers that the student might have failed an exam for which he struggled and worked hard. Therefore, inability to accept the truth and seeing his dreams getting shattered affected his state of mind.

MM10

The suicide note is written by a husband, who spent four paralyzed years, with his wife. He mentions how dreadful the years had been but he lived knowing that his wife needed him. The statement 'Now that I've seen you growing, I can die in peace in the hopes that you'll raise our children to become good human beings' infers that he felt hopeless and helpless after being paralyzed but stayed to support his wife and help her in attaining a position to be able to earn for the family. Since the motive got fulfilled and he saw his wife moving on with the world, he no more felt the urge to live and stay.

#### **4.3.2 Analysis of Female Suicide Notes**

F1

The suicide note is written by a girl who seems to have been attached with somebody who left her. The statements 'I still remember those promises you made to me. Now when you stepped back without thinking of us, the purpose of my life ended' infers that the person made the victim rely on his false promises which left her shattered therefore, she was unable to accept the fact that he left. The statement 'My family wants me to get married now but it's not possible for me and this is the only option left for I know I cannot stay happy' suggests the pressure from her family to get married to somebody she did not approve of but her voice was kept unheard. The reason for suicide, as mentioned in the note, was the rejection by her loved one but it is also predicted that family pressure to marry someone else added to her stress which led her to take her life.

F2

The note is written by a daughter to her father. She states how hard she tried to fulfil his expectations. The statements 'I always tried to reach up to the requirements of my family and friends. Tried to be perfect in every way yet I found no one satisfied and happy with my conduct' depicts how badly she craved for the approval of people around her but failed as nobody was said to be content with her. This also implies that she lived her life pleasing others overshadowing her own desires. The statement 'I thought life would change a little when I'll get committed. Committed to the one my family chose' infers her thought that she believed in the view that if she will get engaged to the one that her family chose; she would be able to please her family and be happy which was not true. This also predicts that she wasn't allowed to make decisions on her own or to choose her life partner. It infers that she wasn't happy the way she was spending her life and agreed on marrying her family's choice in the hopes of having a better life ahead. She mentions how hard she tried, because of her father, to stay in the relationship. Words as 'worthless' and 'lifeless' in the statement 'I feel worthless and lifeless in front of the rules he set for me and I have no other choice left depicts sense of frustration and mistrust from herself. She continues and says, 'in search for peace, I choose to end this life'. The use of pessimist terms as 'dead', 'suffocated' and 'unable' depicts her hopelessness and discouragement from life.

F3

The letter is referred to her parents where she mentions the reason behind taking this step. She talks about a loved one which seems as if it was her husband who passed away. She mentions the trauma she had been through ever since he died and how she became a different person after his death. The statement 'I stopped everything just as I was sick of a disease that was incurable' depicts the mental state of the victim where she feels like things are unsolvable and would stay the same throughout her life. She feels downhearted and awful about her situation and no hopes cross her mind. The statement 'I know this would hurt you but I'm content to think that your life would move on that isn't possible if I'll be alive' infers that her parents had been really worried about her condition and it brought a full stop into their lives for which she regretted. She thought that her death would serve to ease out their pain and their life which became stagnant and dreary seeing the tragedy which happened with her.

F4

The suicide note refers to her parents who showered her with their endless love and affection. She mentions how hyper she was as a child and how difficult it had been for the family to tackle her. 'You did your part but I wasn't meant for this cruel world. I never belonged here' infers that she was rejected by the society or was not welcomed the way she expected. The statement 'I was raised by strong parents and I had strong opinions, just like you both, which were crushed badly by this world' depicts that her parents always gave their daughter sense of confidence and tried to raise her without hurting her individuality. She was raised with confidence and care which made her into a person with a very strong personality which was shattered and broken by the members of the society. The letter draws our attention towards one of the major prevailing issue in Pakistani society that is to be married by a certain age. The statements 'I've crossed past thirty in the wait of getting married to the perfect guy who did not come and I cannot see you both getting affected and hurt because of it. I cannot see you both responding to others when they ask you about me and I cannot see you both being broken and hurt. I'm sorry but this mourning is a lot better than mourning an unmarried daughter for the rest of years.' portrays the state of mind of the victim at the time of committing suicide. This also raises a question against our society where unmarried women are objectified, degraded and bashed for not being married. They are pushed to a level where they are forced to believe that an unmarried woman has no status in the society. She is bereaved of living her life the way she wants to live because she did not fit to the collective mindset of the society. The letter also denotes how badly societal customs affect the mental wellbeing of a person.

F5

The suicide note is a single liner which deeply depicts the chaos within the victim's mind. The statement 'I am not perfect in any way. I am tired of hearing this all the time' draws our attention towards the bitter reality of our society which instils the concept of perfection within us. This ends up deteriorating a person's personality. The statement, hence, depicts sense of under confidence, hopelessness and lack of faith in herself which was instilled by the said society. The struggle to become 'perfect' led her to suicide.

F6

The suicide letter is referred to her parents apologizing for marrying a person of her choice. The statements 'I am sorry for selecting the wrong person for myself. I am sorry for not taking your consent and I am sorry for making you feel dishonoured and disrespectful in front everyone.' Infers that the victim married the person of her choice without the consent of her family. This draws our attention to a fact that females in our society are still being snubbed. At times when they end up taking their own decisions or go against the decision of their family, they are not provided with the support and love which they would have gotten if they have surrendered to the decision of their family. Lack of support and trust from the family ends up making the individual frail. The statement 'These months had been the worst of all but what else did I expect after hurting you all so bad. Sorry for being a deceitful daughter.' Depicts how embarrassed and grieved the victim felt taking her own decision which turned out to be wrong. This also infers lack of connection between the family and her and her inability to face her family after a wrong decision. The victim, hence, ended up in suicide after a failed love marriage.

F7

The letter does not directly refer to anyone but it seems that it was written for her father because of whom she was disturbed. She expresses how she dreamt of a content and happy life with her parents and siblings. The statements 'I always wanted us all to hang out, love and care for one another just the way I used to see my friends. I never wanted luxury living or these big social circles. All I wanted was us. All I wanted was a family' predict two things. Either the victim's father used to spend very less of his time at home due to the work commitments and his struggle to provide luxury to his family. The other prediction could be that her father lived somewhere out from the house may be due to his unfriendly terms with his spouse. The statements also infer that her father was accustomed to spending time in social gatherings instead of providing some quality family time to his children which affected the child. Lack of family bonding forced the writer towards suicide.

F8

The letter is written by a wife to her husband who tortured her throughout the marriage and broke the dreams that she dreamt. The statements 'You were the one who



out of your complexities, made me believe how wisdom less, worthless and miserable I was' predicts that the victim was being bullied under the hands of her husband which devastated her personality and made her feel trashy and insignificant. This also predicts that her husband was complexed maybe due to differences in family status, intellect or appearance which made him do such conduct due to his insecurities. The victim mentions clear reasons for her suicide. The sentences and phrases as 'My father died but you did not send me back. You told me that you were penny less and I trusted you knowing that you were making excuses. I stayed the way you wanted me to stay and I never questioned you on anything because this is what I was told by mama, to never question. I would never have even questioned you if you wouldn't have killed my child' depicts the misery she had gone through. This brings out a major issue in male-chauvinistic society which we are a part of. Males tend to pressurize and rule on their women, in some cases, which badly affects the mental wellbeing and personality of women shattering their self-confidence leading them towards hopelessness.

F9

The suicide note is a single liner which depicts that the note writer had been through a burdensome life. The statement 'Sorry but I cannot handle the burden. I was never meant for here' infers that the victim was overburdened into chores which she couldn't handle thus decided to suicide. This also predicts the loss of connection of the victim with her social group due to which the situation ended up having an adverse effect on her. Though the reason for suicide is not explicitly mentioned, it is inferred that the feeling of being lonely and inability to discuss the circumstances with anyone led the victim to feel burdened and suffocated.

F10

The letter depicts how the writer feels that she is of no good and how worthless she is as a human being. The clause 'I cannot be any better' from the statement 'I am not a good person and I cannot be any better' infers that the victim was given a reality check time and again that she wasn't good enough and that she tried hard to come up to the expectations of people. The statement 'I am tired of apologizing for the mistakes which aren't actually mistakes' predicts that the victim was forced to apologize time and again for things that were done without people's consent which affected her overall persona. 'I am tired of fulfilling the roles you want me to fulfil. I think that I just don't

have the ability to make people happy and there is no point of me even staying' depicts the loss of space to make her own decisions and live the life the way she wanted to live. She, therefore, spent her years reaching up to the demands of somebody with whom she had a close relation with and who ended up breaking her faith from own self. Inability to make her own decisions and hopelessness led her to suicide.

F11

The suicide letter was written for her sister with whom she was living with. The note writer mentions how her sister took care of her after the death of their father and how she got to realize the bitter truth about the society right after his death. The statement 'I was always told that being a girl isn't easy and I never understood it until a few days back' infers that she had been disturbed and traumatized since a few days due to an incident or a scenario. She mentions it further by stating 'I would better have stayed for longer if I've had more guts to encounter \*\*\*\* Bhai. He is an exceptional husband and would be an outclass father too but he wasn't a good brother-in-law or a human being'. The statement along with the previous statement with the phrase 'being a girl isn't easy' depicts that the victim was either mistreated, violated or harassed. The scenario brings our attention to the number of troubles unmarried females face after the death of their parents and how members of society, specifically close relations, end up maligning or disrespecting them.

F12

The letter is written by a daughter to her parents. It is evident from the note that she was pushed into something against her will which apparently seems marriage. The statement 'For you, your respect was higher than my desire and I respect it but I don't have a heart as big which would accept the decision that you made' predicts that the girl was forced into a relationship where she was not comfortable. The use of 'desire' depicts that maybe she was interested somewhere else or had different aims in life. Nevertheless, her voice didn't mark an importance. 'Respecting your respect, I am not taking any steps against your will but I cannot even go by your will. Tell them that I died of an accident' brings our attention to the societal issues and cultural norms which a person is accustomed to look upon. The victim, in order to save her family from disrespect and embarrassment, suicided instead of going by her decision. the clause 'tell

them that I died of an accident’ depicts how suicide is regarded as a social stigma which is mostly covered to avoid disgrace.

F13

The suicide note does not refer to anyone and depicts general reasons due to which she decided to suicide. The statements ‘I refused to become a conventional girl and I did a mistake. You need to follow the definition of being a woman to stay happy’ portrays the problems women face in this society where they are forced to live a certain way and opt for certain approved rituals to be accepted in the social circle. If they tend to go out of the box or aim for things that are meant odd for the society, they are either bashed or humiliated. Though the reason for suicide is not explicitly mentioned, inability to live the way she wished to live led her to suicide.

F14

The note refers to nobody at specific. It says that whoever reads it should not seek medical help for her as she has planned up not to live anyone. She uses words like deceit, agony, pain, heartbreaks, sufferings and lies to explain how much of misery lies in the world. The statement ‘Till this day, I stayed because I thought there are good days along with the bad ones but I was wrong and I misunderstood life. Life is the name of agony and pain’ predicts that the victim had been under tough times since a long time and was singled out by the people. Unable to hold on to the pain, led her to take her life.

F15

The note writer depicts how she feels by mentioning words as ‘hollow’ and ‘lifeless’. This mentions the amount of hopelessness inside the victim. The statement ‘I tried to show this place that I am worth something but failure is what has always been my fate. I failed to live’ mentions how much she craved to fit in the society and prove her worth. Failing to prove the world her worth and the feeling of being worthless led her to suicide.

F16

The suicide note is a one liner which depicts loss of confidence from her own self. The statement ‘I am sick and I’ve nothing good inside that would push me to stay’

depicts the state of brokenness from the victim's part maybe due to the brutal conduct by the people around her.

F17

The note mentions the state of mind through the use of phrases and words as 'deeply saddened, dead inside, badly wounded, try to smile, a mess deep down and doesn't feel good'. The clause 'this isn't what I deserve' infers the sense of disappointment that the victim had and that she deserved to stay content. The statements 'You want me to relive life but you are hiding the fact that there is no place for somebody who is abandoned by her husband. There is no room for the one who has to live alone for the rest of her life with all the backlash and allegations upon her' draws our attention to a heart wrenching reality of our society where a woman is backlashed, blamed and humiliated if she gets divorce. The concept of divorce is still stigmatized and considered as the fault on the woman's part in Pakistani society due to which a lot of women, out on anxiety, commit suicide.

F18

The letter is written by a daughter to her parents who forced her to do things of their own choice. She mentions it with the use of statements as 'I was told to listen to what your heart says and fulfil the desires that you have deep down for me' 'I studied just the way you wanted me to' 'I struggled days and nights just to make your dreams come true' and 'I was told to never question'. She had the desire of being a painter which was compromised under the hands of her parents who wanted her to become a doctor. The statements 'Did you ever ask about my dreams? Did you ever ask about what I wanted to be?' and 'I also had dreams to be fulfilled and I had life which I wanted to live in its fullest. Till this day, I just spent the days. Till this day, the days only passed' raise questions upon her own self as an individual and upon her expectations from herself. This brings our attention to the bitter truth of the society where women, at most, are treated as puppets and are often forced under the hands of their own close relations without realizing the negative impact it carries towards their personality. Inability to fulfil her dreams and loss of interest from the path her family chose, led her to suicide.

F19

The note writer depicts the bafflement inside her mind by using words and phrases as ‘chaos’, ‘unable to operate myself’, ‘enforced’, ‘worthless’, ‘unproductive’ and ‘unhappy’. The statement ‘I feel like I am unable to operate myself now but then I feel that I never operated myself. I was operated by the people around me. My emotions and desires marked no importance’ predicts that victim had no voice of hers and was forced to mould and digest the things she did not approve of. The statement ‘I feel myself to be worthless and unproductive’ depicts the outcome of it. Due to the fact that the victim was forced to be the way she did not want to be, she felt worthless, unproductive and lifeless which compelled her to suicide.

F20

The suicide note is a one liner with unclear predictions. The statement ‘I’m sorry I’m leaving earlier’ infers that she might would have some undone tasks or responsibilities that she was supposed to do. Mentioning no specific reason for suicide and referring to no specific person infers that maybe she never had that bond with anybody who she could consider important enough to be addressed. Having said that, loneliness could be one of the factors behind suicide.

F21

The suicide note doesn’t specifically refer to anyone. ‘whoever reads this’ infers two things. Either the victim was living alone in a place where her relatives were not nearby or either the victim had no close relations to address to. She asks the reader to contact on the provided number and hand over her children to him. The statement ‘I don’t have anybody else to handover my kids. He is the father to them and should be responsible for their upbringing’ predicts that he was probably the last choice left to leave her kids to. This also infers that she was solely looking after her kids after separation. Surviving alone and handling all the burden on her own seemed too much for her to deal. Inability to deal with pressure and living a life without support compelled the victim to suicide.

F22

The suicide note is written by an unmarried girl whose height became a hurdle in getting herself married. The sentence structure, lexical and semantic errors in the

statement 'I've been rejected 20 times, the only fault i have short hight' predict that the victim had her schooling from a mediocre institute or wasn't very well educated. The statement brings light upon the standards being set by the society when it comes to getting their sons married that minor physical attributes are often targeted and made base for rejection which ends up breaking the self-confidence of females. Stress over rejection led the victim to suicide.

F23

The note was written by a wife whose husband died in a car accident. She uses words as 'hard', 'painful' and 'dreadful' to mention the agony she had been into. The statement 'In the hopes of staying happy and meeting him in the next world, I quit' infers two scenarios. First, the way she was treated under the hands of society which did not allow her to stay content. Second, the feeling of loneliness she felt after the demise of her husband. Her inability to bear the loss of husband, the feeling of being lonely and inability to tackle things in such state of mind became the reason for suicide.

F24

The suicide note was addressed to the victim's brother. The statement 'I could not marry him bhai' brings our attention towards an important cultural issue where the female's consent in marriage isn't regarded. Therefore, she was forced by the men of the family to abide by their rules which left her with no choice but to suicide.

F25

The note was written by an acid attack survivor where the victim's cousin threw acid on her face. The phrase 'and bad luck that I survived' infers that the victim underwent numerous problems after surviving through it. The statement 'My family think I'm a curse for them and a hurdle for other siblings happiness so I ran away' brings our attention towards a major social issue where survivors of acid attack are being abandoned by their own families due to the fear of their community forcing them to either suicide or leave their families.

FF1

The victim mentions the state of chaos that she had been through over time. She uses words as 'darkness', 'lifeless' and 'paralyzed' to depict how unproductive she used

to feel with no power to think or act anymore. The statements 'Ever since I was born, I saw you both fighting over baseless things. I saw you taunting and showing tantrums over minute scenarios' depict the situation at her house which affected her badly. This also draws our attention to a fact that growing up in an ill or disturbed environment affects the personality and mental peace of a person. This, in turn, serves to affect their capacity to think positively and on the right track. The statements 'I learnt the same and now after all these years of learning, I do the same. You had been devastating on my part. I am unable to trust any relation' infers that the victim was facing several issues due to her behaviour of being negative and doing the things which she saw her family doing. Although she knew that she was doing things the wrong way but the form of conduct probably became a part of her habit. The feeling of helplessness and inability to lead a life away from negativity led her to take her life.

FF2

The suicide note is addressed to her parents. The clause 'I hold no unheard words' depict that she was an extrovert by nature therefore, the things that were making her disturbed were already known to her family. She explains how her parents had been the best and the fault was hers. The statement 'I'm sorry for disgracing you. I tried to make the marriage work. I gave my everything to it and I kept pushing it as long as I could' infers the amount of embarrassment and disappointment on the victim's part for not keeping up with the marriage. This also draws our attention to a cultural issue where a failed marriage is considered to bring disgrace and disrepute to the girl's family. This also depicts the amount of compromise from the victim's part to make the marriage work only so that her family could be saved from facing dishonour and degradation. The statement 'I know you don't blame me for a failed marriage and I know you still love me despite of all the things that people say to your face but I know this too that deep inside, you're worried and stressed' points out a major social problem in the society where people tend to poke their nose in everybody's issue and pass their derogatory and negative remarks without understanding the amount of devastation it would bring on their parts. The bashing which came from people around after her divorce and the inability to handle stress led the victim to suicide.

FF3

The note is written for her parents. She mentions words and phrases as ‘dreadfully awful’, ‘darkness’, ‘tried’ and ‘failed’ to depict the situations she had been through over the years. The statements ‘I tried to tell you that I wasn’t wrong. I tried to apologize for the deeds that I did not do. I tried through every mean to prove myself right but failed’ infers that her parents blamed their daughter over an incident or an act without getting the said justification from her. This clearly denotes the loss of faith and trust by her parents for which she tried several times to prove her stance but was left unheard and misunderstood. The statements ‘I’m not here today to justify for my deeds. Just know, that your daughter didn’t put you down. Your daughter was at right and she deserved to be trusted’ points out the amount of frustration at the part of victim for trying to justify and prove that she did not commit a mistake. This also infers lack of trust onto her from her family. The feeling of being unheard, misjudged and humiliation are inferred as the major causes behind suicide of the victim.

FF4

The suicide note does not address to a particular person but it seems as if she was talking to her parents. The statement ‘I’m unable to justify things to you every time. I thought it was my life’ draws our attention to two major points which are somehow connected. First point is the fact that living in a culture where children have to abide by the rules being set by the family, there, at times, come string of endless rules where the child has to clarify for every single step that she takes with her will and without their consent which affects their growing personality where they don’t find the facility to grow and make their own decisions sometimes. The second point implies the induction of her family into her life to such a point where she starts questioning whether she is doing anything of her choice as well. Inability to lead a life the way people want to, takes away their interest from life which leads to such scenarios as suicide.

FF5

The note is addressed to her parents who were utterly loving and overprotective about their child. The statements ‘I’m just leaving because I need space. I’m just leaving because I’m over protected by you. I’m just leaving because I am not allowed to make my own decisions. I’m just leaving because you did not approve of what I loved’ draws our attention to the fact that children are overprotected and over guided in the society



which we are a part of. It tends to hinder their capacity to grow, capabilities and decision-making abilities. The second prevailing issue is not giving the children enough space to decide and discuss for themselves.

FF6

The statements in the letter ‘I failed to do anything of my own here in this world. I thought I had the right to choose things for myself too’ holds two predictions. Either the victim was not given the right by her family to decide things on her own or either the victim faced issues under the hands of the collective social mind of the society where she had to abide by the regulations even when she aimed for something else.

FF7

The suicide note is written by a child to her parents. The statement ‘I was ordered to keep shut and I kept quiet for the longest time knowing how the things would malign your reputation being parents to a daughter who was molested’ grabs our attention towards a social dilemma where victims of abuse are forced to keep quiet due to social stigma and the fear of a maligned reputation. Abuse and molestation are such serious issues which demand urgent counselling. The lack of proper treatment and focus and lead to dreadful scenarios. The child, when unheard, often ends up feeling suffocated which leads to such consequences.

FF8

The statement ‘This is the first and only decision that I made for myself’ implies that her family was the one who was leading her all her life thus she had no major right to decide for herself. The statements ‘You pushed me to think about \*\*\*\*\* because you wanted me to marry him. Nine years went by in a flash until one day when your decision changed. I don’t consider you responsible for anything but I pray that may you learn treating your other children as humans and not dummies’ draws our attention towards a major cultural issue where parents, at times, impose their decisions on their children without realizing their feelings and the impact it carries upon them mentally. The emotional trauma which came along after the decision of her family led her to suicide.

### **4.3.3 Discussion on the Results of the Relevance Theory on Suicide Notes**

The analysis of Suicide notes on the basis of 'Relevance Theory' was done keeping in view the variables, males and females. The results denote that majority of the males commit suicide due to the stress over financial issues. Joblessness, inability to pay for the raised rents & other necessities of life and not meeting up to the expectations of the family members are some of the reasons.

Another major reason in youngsters which compels them to suicide in Pakistan is choosing a forced career and not being able to perform good in it due to lack of interest. Other reasons for the increased suicide in youngsters are mistreatment by educational institutions, failing in exams and anxiety over career.

Other issues for committing suicide are loss of beloved, rejection from the society, loss in business, humiliation by the society due to misunderstanding or wrong allegations and inability to prove innocence, and depression.

An evident contrast was found while analysing the suicide notes of females. The major reason for females to suicide in Pakistani society is their inability to spend life the way they want to and make choices on their own. Women in Pakistani society are forced to rely upon the men heading their homes for their decisions and choices.

Other basic reasons for suicide are issues of marriage, loss of beloved, divorce, depression, harassment and violence. Women are often forced to keep quiet after being abused which takes away their will to survive. Other than that, acid attack and single parenting are also prominent and one of the reasons for suicide.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Findings

The statistical analysis of suicide notes presents that although the genre is the same for both variables, males and females, the use of lexical categories is quite different.

As per the studies by Gregory (1999), Jones and Benell (2007) individuals writing suicide notes use nouns and verbs at most. The same results are observed in this study where Pakistani suicide notes written in English are analyzed. The use of nouns in male suicide notes indicate that majority of men worry and talk about 'life' (84%) and 'world' (51%) with worries of 'time' (30%), 'family' (38%) and 'money' (97%). Whereas, female suicide notes usually revolve around 'life' (100%) with worries of 'family' (53%), 'decision' (27%), 'people' (27%) and 'dreams' (94%). They generally talk about their previous 'days' (42%) and how their 'heart' (19%) had been in 'pain' (80%).

The use of verbs in male suicide notes indicate that they mostly discuss about what they have 'done' (67%) and the things they 'have' (97%) had. They talk about the times they 'tried' (51%) to make things better and what they actually 'wanted' (38%) in life. They 'tell' (43%) the untold and 'request' (46%) for the things they want when they would no more be there. In contrast, the verbs used in female suicide notes predict that they generally talk about what they 'wanted' (97%) from life and how much they 'tried' (79%) to get it. They discuss their emotional state by discussing how things 'made' (64%) them 'feel' (85%) and how they wanted to 'live' (45%) but the 'dreams' (79%) were not made true and how 'hurt' (73%) they felt in life because of unfulfilled wishes. It was also noted that females usually are snubbed and unheard hence, most of their major decisions in life, including marriage, are made by the authoritative men which becomes one of the major reasons for them to lose interest from life. Through the suicide notes, they discuss marriage and the kind of person they wanted to 'marry' (33%). A lot of note writers, through their writing, 'apologized' (44%) for their deeds which were considered wrong for them being women.

It was observed that females use more adjectives and adverbs as compared to men. This denotes that females are more elaborative in their notes and generally provide with sufficient information mentioning the reasons for suicide and the situations they were dealing with. The adjective ‘sorry’ (97%) was used the most in female suicide notes. This predicts that due to social pressure, females are more prone to hiding their emotions. The societal pressure forces them to do what they want them to instead of what they themselves want to do in lives. This behaviour effects them adversely and results in helplessness, hopelessness and weakness of personality which becomes evident in their writing.

Lenard (2016) in a study concluded that women use less first-person pronoun ‘I’ as compared to men. They use ‘I’ to generally report an incident or experience putting emphasis on the event or the experience whereas, men use ‘I’ emphasizing their role and importance in the event. The study of Shapero (2011) discussed that 82.43% of female suicide notes used first-person pronoun ‘I’ whereas, 83.02% of males used it in their suicide notes. It was surprising to see that when compared to the discourse of men, women in Pakistani suicide notes written in English used more first-person pronoun. In 86% of male suicide notes, ‘I’ was noticed whereas, 100% of female suicide notes included the first-person pronoun ‘I’. Living in a male patriarchal society where women are pressurized to stay quiet and not talk about themselves, suicide notes is a genre where the inbuilt frustration vomits out without the fear of consequences. Hence, a change in the use of first-person pronoun ‘I’ is evident.

While analysing the use of conjunctions in male and female suicide notes, it was noticed that females use more conjunctions as compared to men. This concludes that females mostly use prolonged, complex and detailed sentence structures resulting them to use more conjunctions.

The study by Cabana et.al (2015), in the region of Chile, stated that one or more characteristics of interpersonal theory of suicide were observed in 60% of the suicide notes where ‘lack of belonging/ Thwarted Belongingness’ was the major factor found in majority of the notes. The rest of the notes did mention the emotive tone but the characteristics of interpersonal theory of suicide were not present in all of the suicide notes. In contrast to it, all of the Pakistani suicide notes written in English, under study, contained either one or both characteristics of the interpersonal theory of suicide. It is

observed that 72.97% of male suicide notes had the characteristics of 'Perceived Burdensome'. 51.35% of the male notes had the characteristics of Thwarted Belongingness' whereas, 18.91% of male suicide notes depicted the characteristics of both features. As per the analysis of female suicide notes, 69.69% of female suicide notes had the characteristics of 'Perceived Burdensome'. 51.51% of the female notes had the characteristics of Thwarted Belongingness' whereas, 36.36% of male suicide notes depicted the characteristics of both features.

The characteristics of 'Perceived Burdensome', therefore, were more evident in male and female suicide notes. The results of the study were different from the aforementioned study of Cabana (2015) where 'Thwarted Belongingness' was the most prominent feature in the notes and 40% of the notes did not have characteristics from the interpersonal theory of suicide. This indicates that with the difference in society, culture and societal issues, emotional feelings could vary as well. It is also observed that Pakistani suicide notes are considerably emotive and vocal with evident features depicting the interpersonal theory of suicide as compared to the suicide notes of the western world.

The analysis of Suicide notes on the basis of 'Relevance Theory' denotes that male majorly commit suicide due to stressing over money. Men, depicted as the sole breadwinners for the home, are looked upon to fulfil the needs and requirements of the family. Joblessness, inability to pay for the raised rents & other necessities of life and not meeting up to the expectations of the family members are basic reasons for suicide. Men therefore, under the pressure of fulfilling the basic roles, become stressed. They're forced to look strong and competitive every time which takes away their right to vent out their feelings due to which they, at times, are unable to cope with the societal pressure.

Another major reason that was observed in youngsters was choosing a forced career and not being able to perform well. Other significant reasons for suicide among youngsters are; their inability to get the expected grades, mistreatment by educational institutions, failing in exams and anxiety over career. This draws our attention to one of the paramount issues in our society where intellect is measured in the form of grades and where getting average or low grades closes opportunities to rise in the society.

Other issues for committing suicide were loss of beloved, rejection from the society, loss in business, humiliation by the society due to misunderstanding or wrong allegations and inability to prove innocence, and depression.

An evident contrast was found while analysing the suicide notes of females. The major reason for females to suicide in Pakistani society is their inability to spend life the way they want to and make choices on their own. Women in Pakistani society are forced to rely upon the men heading their homes for their decisions and choices. They're given less or no confidence to make their own independent decisions due to which, they at times feel that they're living somebody else's life.

Other basic reasons for suicide are issues of marriage, loss of beloved, divorce, depression, harassment and violence. Women are often forced to keep quiet after being abused which takes away their will to survive. Other than that, acid attack and single parenting are also prominent and one of the reasons for suicide.

## **5.2 Conclusion and Recommendations**

It is evident from the statistical analysis of suicide notes that the lexical choices made by both genders, males and females, are different as per the social issues they face and the personality traits that they possess. Male suicide notes are generally precise. Although the length of notes isn't small but the selection of words and the choice of sentence structure is composed and to the point whereas, female suicide notes are emotive and elaborative. the subject of talk in male suicide notes is generally 'life' and 'world' with worries of 'time', 'family' and 'money'. Whereas, female suicide notes usually revolve around 'life' with worries of 'family', 'decision', 'people' and 'dreams'. They generally talk about their previous 'days' and how their 'heart' had been in 'pain'.

The analysis of suicide notes with respect to the interpersonal theory of suicide indicates that with the difference in society, culture and societal issues, emotional feelings could vary as well. Where the studies of western world have shown the characteristic of 'Thwarted Belongingness' to be the major feature evident in suicide notes, characteristics of 'Perceived Burdensome' were mostly observed in Pakistani Suicide notes. It is also observed that Pakistani suicide notes are considerably emotive

and vocal with evident features depicting the interpersonal theory of suicide as compared to the suicide notes of the western world.

The semantic analysis of suicide notes draws our attention to major issues faced by the society where gender plays an eminent role. Males usually suicide over lack of financial opportunities, debt, depression and inability to fulfill their responsibility. Whereas, females usually suicide due to disapproval of choices, issues of marriage and issues in marriage, inability to select their own choices and stress.

The following study is beneficial for upcoming researches in the field of forensic linguistics as well as psychology. The forensic linguists would be able to get an in-depth overview of the lexical categories used by males and females in Pakistani Suicide Notes written in English. This would help them determine linguistic patterns which could serve to be useful in differentiating authentic and fabricated suicide notes. In the field of psychology, the study would highlight and address the prevailing social issues faced by both genders. It would also provide an insight to the perceptions and thoughts of suicide note writers which compels them to suicide.

This research has a few limitations. First, given the ethical difficulties in procuring a large sample size, the study has a very moderate sample which is considered common in a qualitative research. This limits the ability to explore genuine-staged similarities/differences to its full extent. Hence, extension and replication on a larger scale is required to explore other variables. Second, with the exception of gender, no other moderating variables were examined – such as age – which limited the researcher's ability to better understand how other factors may affect the writing of suicide notes.

The findings of the study provide a solid foundation to build on for the Future researches which could explore other variables and come up with a thematic analysis of suicide notes with respect to age differences. The analysis of suicide notes in Urdu language or other regional languages could also be performed to analyze the difference in the use of lexical categories with regards to variables. Genre analysis could also be performed if extensive data requirement could be completed. Sentimental analysis on suicide notes can also be incorporated to infer the tone of notes. Real suicide notes can also be compared and contrasted with the simulated ones to get a deeper overview between them and clues which could predict a real note from a morphed suicide note.

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