

SUICIDE LINKED TO EXCESSIVE HOMEWORK IN CHINA

Daniel Otero

English Teacher, Investigative Paper, The Silver Beach Community High School, Hui-dong County, China

ABSTRACT: *What made young people between the ages of 15 to 34 take their lives; affecting constantly the 'Y' and millennial generations? Sadly, and more often than not, it is the young people jumping-off buildings to their deaths. The common reason why this was happening came with the unrealistic expectations of success. One in which, it is a burden of 17 to 18 hour days/five to six days a week full of classes and plenty of homework. A stress level not often seen in Westernized countries, but across Asia, which is quite common in countries like: China, Japan and South Korea. Therefore, affecting the 'flower of youth', especially in the Ancient Middle Kingdom (China). The pressure is so great, because of the current-high level of competition, over expectation and the overpopulation. For every Chinese, they literally have to fight for every centimeter to achieve something. What commonly broke my heart were the young who couldn't take this burdensome workload and decided to end their lives. Whether these youths were in primary school or those preparing for the 'Hukou' (the literal, 'nail-biting' tough college entrance exam). Therefore, linking homework to suicides in youngsters as the common cause of death! This investigation pretends to focus on a survey/questionnaire for high school students and teachers about suicide. The reasons why Chinese have excessive workloads and how can these problems be reduced inside a country with the highest-suicide rate in the world.*

KEYWORDS: 'Y'/Millennial Generations, Jumping-off Buildings, Ages 15 to 34, Suicide, Stress, Pressure, Overpopulation, the 'Hukou' exam.

INTRODUCTION

In 2015, I was working on a column for the *Hangzhou Weekly* (2012 - 2016). As their columnist, I was shocked to read a story about an 11-year old girl who had jumped from her parents seventh-story apartment to her death (Lixin, 2015). At the time, she was sent home because of incomplete homework.

I thought to my shock and horror, "My God, something so trivial and to end like this. What a tragedy!" That was when, I later found out how wrong I was.

However, it isn't so trivial for those not used to dealing with the pressures of life. Even less talking about them. Inside a population that most often, it's a single child and hasn't had exposure to the real problems of the world.

We can easily say, "Toughen up!" But to what degree will this help.

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It was when, I started thinking about my days as a student. I would have incomplete homework. I'd be sent home with a note and of course, I'd lose some points; then, it was to get a scolding from my mom and life went on.

Here in China, the pressure on these kids is gargantuan. And I really mean when I say it (Otero, 2016).

Back in the States (the U.S.), you have such things like: violence, bullying or cyber bullying; which will lead some kids to commit suicide. But it is seldom about the pressures of homework.

Then, as I was working for my then editor at the *Global Times*. I approached her with a provocative piece. This was when, "Seek help, not suicide" was born. Through her constant guidance, friendship and help, we put out a great piece that till this day astonishes me. It got a number of hits throughout the internet. Made me proud and at the time, it also sadden me about what was happening to this generation; especially those in the 'Y' and millennial categories. Those kids which would easily take their lives over the pressures of study and dismal prospects of work. Usually, the ages consisted between teenagers to early 30s. Demonstrating the shocking toll of victims jumping-off high rises 70 to 80 percent of the times (Otero, 2016).

When I began to investigate further, I was surprised to know how little services and mental health professionals were in place to help those in need.

This was when I decided to write about this topic. Investigate it further, seek out through students: their take on suicide and measure the percentages of those dealing with this mental anguish.

I wanted to write more about the topic and see how the numbers could help youngsters discuss openly about the problem. Furthermore, search out institutions for help, whether it was through: mental health specialist, counselors, teachers and parents, etc.

In a country where more often than not, these issues aren't openly discussed for the betterment or wellness of a society. Everything can be very secretive, even when it matters! It's just a well known, 'public secret'.

I wanted to investigate through a questionnaire on how to help others; while in the meantime, give these kids the needed assistance through facts and contact numbers throughout China. This was including Hong Kong, S.A.R., China.

As I traveled and lived through China, it wasn't only high buildings. People used all forms of methods to end their lives. Whether it was jumping off bridges, like in the case of the *Nanjing Yangtze River Bridge* (You, 2016). Others chose to open cable-car doors or use the top of tourist mountain areas just to end everything from life's problems. One thing was certain. Most of these people always chose to jump from high altitudes to guarantee their deaths.

What started this problem in Mainland China

It commenced over 40-years ago. By the late 1970s, as the economy began to shift from a communist society to a capitalist one. It also began to change the standard of living for most Chinese. The concept was to go into full-blown capitalism. Now, success wasn't to only become a member of the Communist Party. It meant to have: finer clothes, jewelry, more money, a better car, travel around China (presently, it's around the world), get an apartment and many would go as far as getting a 'perm' to demonstrate their success.

Those who couldn't achieve the materialistic wealth expressed above, were considered failures! Suddenly, to be a winner, you had to study finance or economics to later become a business professional. Personal wealth equated to 'happiness'.

Another symbolism of success and added to this pressure was to get married. Most people in China, especially with the older generation, expect their offspring to marry right after University. For a good majority of males or females, the ideal marrying age ought to be around 24-years old. For these 20-something men and women, getting married after 30 will make you 'old'; people sometimes calling those not married 'auntie' or 'uncle'. This stigma is especially powerful on females. However, there's a greater problem in China. There are more males than females. For every 120 males, there's only 100 females (The Guardian, 2011). Therefore, this other factor was added to the problems of suicide in the young; for possibly not being able to find a mate.

China is also a country that hasn't accepted as of yet, gay love. So, it is not uncommon for people to feel isolated and lonely. These feelings have caused depression and mental illness. And these problems aren't frequently talked about. Leading thousands to take their own lives! What people whom are homosexual prefer to do is hide it from their families or if they are lucky enough to get married; they just prefer to remain 'in the closet' till the Chinese government changes its stance on same-sex unions (Otero, 2015).

The shift was dramatic, and laborers were looked down upon when the society became capitalist. Even those who had professions, such as: teaching, were frowned upon. Because, teachers like nurses made less money. The virtues of Confucian society became more and more about money!

And in this society, your 'value' is often equivalent to your 'wealth'!

The shift was so dramatic, millions were and are forced into universities. It doesn't matter if they have the talent for it or not. What's most important is to show others about success, but without losing face.

This was when, by the end of the 1970s, suicides in China began to increase in record numbers. Affecting mostly the labor and professional working force.

Why did suicide started happening with the youth?

There are many factors which began with the growth of this phenomena and spiraled out of control.

One factor was conclusive, between the ‘Y’ and millennial generations, it spiked upward. Towards the end of the 1990s, the studying hours ballooned from a possible 10-hour day to 17-hours a day. This situation started at least 20-years before and went into a frenzy. Almost like having classes on ‘steroids’. The intensity was and still is insanely intense.

For example, I heard stories from the ‘Y’ generation about study periods which lasted three weeks, with only one weekend off.

Time was therefore limited, either you washed or went to eat in the evenings, before students continued studying.

Those who couldn’t keep up either chose to drop out for technical schools. While others became insane with fear at the thought of failing.

When a student in China fails, the criticism is harsh and brutal. It doesn’t come only from teachers and parents. Depending on the school, it can even come from the classmates.

Therefore, there was an increase in teenage suicides in China. Little by little, throughout the years, it began to escalate. Getting out of control, victims were getting younger and younger.

The “Weibo” internet platform in China has reported in the past suicides as something ‘accidental’ (Caskie, 2013). Especially when it referred to the youth.

The biggest issue today is how to change the Chinese educational system and make it into a happier one.

The alternative has been for parents to send their children abroad for education, to avoid the pitfalls of depression and wanton unhappiness. But only 200-million Chinese which are the upper-middle and rich classes can afford to send their children to countries like: Australia, U.K., Canada or the U.S.

However, what about the 1.2 billion who can’t afford to send their kids outside of China. The effort is to place the young into the Chinese-private school sector. This isn’t any better, given the fact, for a huge majority of Chinese it is still about quantity in education and not quality in education.

There’s a current struggle to reform, but this will possibly not become a reality until the next 20-years. Yet, another generation will be severely affected by: mental illness, depression, insomnia, hair loss (this problem in contemporary times affecting both sexes) and constant thoughts of suicide.

What can be done in the meantime?

Many have suggested the following, minimize classes and homework. Cut the day shorter, from 17 or 18-hour-days to less than 10-hour days.

As a student wrote and suggested in one of the questionnaires about suicide, “We are kids, it’s not all about homework. We need sometime to play!”

In many cases, with all of China’s betterment and economical progress, quality of life is still short lived. Chinese are a great society; however, millions will work themselves to literal death, over a quarter-million will still and tragically kill themselves (Coakley, 2008).

In the majority of cases, relationships between children, parents and teachers are ruined from the beginning. There’s child abuse occurring when a parent loses control; especially when a child brings home bad grades (Li, 2018). There’s also a certain level of rebellion from this generation. Those who want to quit school at an early age. Having a child who hates school or their parents so much, that by the time they reach College age, doesn’t want any part of it! This factor is also compounded to the problems of suicide.

If people have too much work/homework, too little talk to ‘iron out’ the problems, a bad or unstable home environment will arise. All the latter cases create a frustration and the desire to terminate their lives.

Education years ought to be enjoyed and these years are not! The happiest moments in children’s life are sucked away; especially the ones through high school. When there isn’t an opportunity to date till the youngsters have reached College age, missing out on the best years of their existence!

Possibly, we can call this cultural, but this phenomena didn’t become part of the Chinese culture until as recent as the last two decades. Affecting mostly the rural areas and females killing themselves in record numbers more than males (Zhang, Jiang, Jia & Wieczorek, 2011).

Contemporary issues and there escalation in the last two decades

Inside a country that considers a naughty-teenager bad, if he or she isn’t sacrificing their time for the books. However, this is what has created that kind of ‘rebellion’ amongst the youth of this country. If we [the young] can’t fit in, we’ll fight the system by becoming a poor student.

But this is a fact often contested, since what really makes a successful human being in life? In part, it’s good schooling. The problem is, that it is literally ‘force fed’ to the entire population. Not everybody is suitable to study in a great college. Most will have to conform with the standard or middle colleges, just to get a job stable enough to pay their bills once they leave school.

In China, school can be a drawn out process, starting as early as three-years old. In the majority of cases, children will be in school for long hours and up to 20 years.

The people are trying to prove themselves and to the world, how great we are! And certainly, what China has done in the last 15 years is close to a miracle. Because they have advanced to have a better society thanks to this way of education. China has achieved in less than two decades what takes most countries 50 years.

Think about, at one point, 40-years before: China was starving, backward and lacked the resources to help their people. Now, it's a nation in which few go without! If this isn't a miracle, I don't know what to call it.

But the price is being paid too high with the young generation, because it's being sacrificed to prove their country and to the world, they can do it!

From this point, I will demonstrate and show a student's schedule from 2006. Afterwards, I will show a schedule from 2018. This isn't the general norm, but it is in the majority of cases.

2006 study schedule (interviewed from student who studied in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China):

- 1) 6:30 a.m. - get up and leave the dorm
- 2) 7:10 - 7:50 a.m. - morning reading, recite, memorize
- 3) 8:00 a.m. - visit the canteen for breakfast
- 4) 8:30 a.m. - 2 periods of 45 minutes (students stay in the same classroom)
- 5) 10:00 a.m. - if it's Monday, flag raising ceremony; Tuesday to Friday, morning exercise
- 6) 10:30 a.m. - back to class and two more class periods
- 7) *12:00 p.m. - lunch & nap (90 minutes) for autumn, spring and summer schedule; winter schedule, only 50 minutes for lunch and without nap
- 8) 12:50 - 1:15 p.m. - classwork, read & free time
- 9) 1:15 p.m. - 4 classes, back to back (students stay in the same classroom)
- 10) 4:15 p.m. - 40 minutes of self-study
- 11) 4:55 p.m. - dinner (50 minutes)
- 12) 5:45 p.m. - back to the classroom and three periods of self-study (45 minutes each, 10-minute break times in between)
- 13) Students will be finishing their day approximately at 10:00 p.m.
- 14) For some students who are in the 11th (Junior) and 12th (Senior) years, they can go on studying and doing homework till midnight.
- 15) *However, keep in mind, during the autumn, spring and summer times—40 more minutes

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are added to the schedule.

16) Saturday - off, no classes

17) Sunday - only 1/2 day off (morning), after it is to complete any homework, study or projects for Monday and the rest of the week.

Now, the biggest problem for most Chinese and the new immigrant society studying in the system is lack of sleep. Since the body needs approximately eight-and-a-half hours of rest to recuperate for the following day.

What happens when the body doesn't receive enough rest? Other than insomnia and depression... The body breaks down, and with lack of sleep wants to commit suicide. Let's not only take the examples occurring presently in China, but in America, with the immigrant Asian population; who often push themselves too hard and far to the brink. With the tragic death of *Iris Chang* (Chinese-American author and writer of 'The Rape of Nanking'), shows what tragedy looks like when people are literally studying or they overwork themselves (Otero, 2018).

Many students get on early into the caffeine binges to stay awake and continue studying. But how productive is this for their lives. Experts have argued endlessly in the East and West about Asians superior habits of study-education. However, the criticism has stemmed on two problems: the educational way of life is often mired on cruelty and child abuse. Criticizing specially the 'Tiger Mothers' of the East on how they raise their children to often become unhappy and neurotic human beings (The Washington Post, 2011).

In the desire to be the best, this society is also sentencing from a young age 'the flower of youth' into miserable lives.

While in America, students have been criticized for having it too easy; almost slacking! Yes, too easy, with only seven to nine hours of schooling. When it has been recommended to increment those hours to several more.

It's been suggested for Southeast and East Asians to reduce their study time to only 10-hour days. Therefore, giving the youth a healthy-mental and stable balance for their future. Noticing that, there isn't much time for fraternizing, a party or the enjoyment of what is known as, 'normal teenage years'. Little attention is paid to having a girlfriend or boyfriend in high school, since the school and parents won't allow it! It's out of the equation, till the person either reaches adulthood or when they go off to College. Denying them the basic survival skills to deal with life's challenges from the beginning.

But this won't happen anytime soon, with China's current push to progress and be number one in the world. When will it happen? Possibly the changes will occur in another generation, 'if' it happens.

2018 Student's schedule Monday thru Thursday (Huizhou, Guangdong Province, China):

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- 1) Wake-up call at 6:30 a.m.
- 2) Breakfast at 7:00 to 7:50 a.m.
- 3) 8:00 - 8:40 a.m. - 1st period (10 minutes in between to change classes)
- 4) 8:50 - 9:30 a.m. - 2nd period
- 5) 9:40 - 10:20 a.m. - 3rd period
- 6) 10:30 - 11:10 a.m. - 4th period
- 7) 11:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - 5th period
- 8) 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. - lunch
- 9) 2:00 - 2:40 p.m. - 6th period
- 10) 2:50 - 3:30 p.m. - 7th period
- 11) 3:40 - 4:20 p.m. - 8th period
- 12) 4:20 - 7:00 p.m. - break & dinner
- 13) 7:00 - 7:40 p.m. - 9th period
- 14) 7:50 - 8:30 p.m. - 10th period
- 15) 8:30 - 10:00 p.m. - self-study
- 16) On average, students would end their study day at midnight.

Therefore, like before, a good majority of students would spend 18 hours of study time in school.

Friday's schedule:

- 1) 8:00 - 8:40 a.m. - 1st period
- 2) 8:50 - 9:30 a.m. - 2nd period
- 3) 9:40 - 10:20 a.m. - 3rd period
- 4) 10:30 - 11:10 a.m. - 4th period
- 5) 11:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - 5th period
- 6) 12:00 - 12:40 p.m. - lunch
- 7) 12:40 - 1:20 p.m. - 6th period
- 8) 1:30 - 2:10 p.m. - 7th period

This isn't the normalcy in China, but given the fact that this is an international school, students would be let out early to go home and enjoy their weekend.

In this case, the day was a little over six hours on average.

Did the schedule in China improve between 2006 and 2018? Objectively, it can be stated that yes, it did improve by 50 to 30-minute lunches and nap breaks. However, more young people were taking their lives by 2018 than 2006! Why was the case? Since, yes, there was more leisure time to rest, but students were still locked in a vicious cycle of competitiveness inside this overpopulated country.

Several reasons have been studied and noted. Chinese have to fight for every centimeter and scrap in this society, since they are too many. The stress for High School students became greater with the 'Hukou' exam, depending on their score, it would guarantee a great University if the student came from a poor-family background (Xinhua, 2008). And if the score was low, it would be for some like a 'death sentence' of poor choices: from low quality Universities to trade schools.

Others who couldn't keep up, either opted to give up completely and do labor work. Some in desperation tried to cheat or plagiarize their way to achieve a better outcome. But these attempts often proved useless. Because once in school, they could not achieve the desired grades.

Giving this society another overflow of problems, with Colleges teaching concentrations which are over-saturated, such as: Finance, Accounting and Economics.

For this reason, students who cannot get into superior Universities, have chosen to either study law or engineering. This is a change; however, it is as in the majority of cases, what they didn't want it in the first place. Already sentencing the citizen to an unhappy life.

Millions of students have also developed addictions with mobile phones, causing serious myopic problems. People losing their site at a young age. Numbers have essentially grown in their addiction to anime games and when not on the phone, causing them to become depressive, antisocial and suicidal. The

CDC (the Center for Disease Control, U.S.) estimated that suicides rose 33% between 2010 and 2015 because too much face time on the phone (Florida State University, 2017). China isn't the exception in this case, since it quintuples the population of the United States. Many spend too much time in a fantasy-gaming world, that has proven fatal in the end; because they can't deal with the real world. Therefore, they can't talk or socialize with others.

For millions of Chinese, normalcy is their studies and work; with sometimes little social interaction for students and people outside a frequently-boring norm. In China, it is called, "Eating the bitter (" 吃苦 ") (Travel China Guide, 2008)!" For some, this concept is passed down in Chinese culture from generation to generation and it may help some to toughen-up. However, it is something which doesn't help all. Because in truth, when it comes down to it,

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if a child is taking his or her own life over something he/she can't handle--better to do away with it. Furthermore, if it's going to create people with mental illnesses. What good is that to a society, when you have those who can't behave properly or cope with this new found success (Otero, 2015)?

This is changing for the better with education (even when the days are sometimes too long). More people travel, international elements are coming in and influencing Chinese society; however, these changes are desperately slow and it's a society that needs to improve on the now.

In the meantime, every two-minutes nine people attempt suicide in China. Of those nine, usually one will succeed (Chelala, 2014).

Problems with the study

Two issues already have made this study flawed from its beginnings.

The fact that the person doing the study is an outsider looking into a society which people generally don't understand. Even when a person has lived in China for a decade, he or she is still the 'laowai' ('老外', the foreigner, 'an outsider looking in').

Asian cultures are mystery for most, even when one 'tries' and I mean tries to become part of it. There are many complicated circumstances that make situations hard to understand. The system will change, but it has to come from within; not an 'outsider' telling others what's wrong!

The other issue stems from the questionnaire which the reader will see after the Conclusion of this paper. Even when the study was done completely private and anonymously. For Chinese, there's still the matter of 'saving face' and what will others think. Once the survey/questionnaire was handed to the students and teachers, some felt the fear or 'what will my colleagues and classmates think of me!' Repeatedly, I had to let those involved know that it was completely private. It was not to expose anybody before the school, parents or administrators. There wasn't to be any kind of 'public shaming', which is a constant and sadly part of this society. It was mentioned over and over, that it was to collect data and once this was done, all results would be destroyed!

The data analyzed will speak for itself and show what's happening in this still mysterious land.

China, this country with many great gifts, but with greater fears and former shadows of the past clicking at their heels! Feeling they have to prove several important factors: to study hard to progress, chase away poverty and to never again have to deal with the lack of; whether it was in poverty, war or famine.

CONCLUSION

A problem in China is usually called, 'A public secret'. This secret is often one to save face

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and to not expose the ‘dirty laundry’. Therefore, it’s not for others to judge or the world to see.

In the majority of cases and daily affairs, most things in China are about saving face. It’s a cultural thing that one has to live in to understand and respect it. And yes, while students in China will study themselves literally ‘to death’. There is a society which is generally less violent than the Western counterparts. Inclined to hard work, study diligently and rarely slack off. Therefore, making this society of many, more successful than the Westernized versions.

Schools in which the teachers are still highly respected/regarded/venerated and there’s not the threat or fear of violence by a knife/gun. Therefore, in many ways, it is a more peaceful society.

However and back to the topic at hand, the study times are far too long and are taking a toll on this adolescent generation. Self-imploding themselves mentally. People whom are too emotional, desperate and in tears to achieve the sometimes ‘impossible dream’.

Five hours or more of homework a night can cause: sleep deprivation, depression, unneeded anxiety and worry. Teachers like parents need to back-off and look for the warning signs. More classes and difficult topics aren’t the keys to success if the student isn’t happy or doesn’t have any life skills to live out in the real world. Talking to the student and not yelling at them is extremely crucial when an assignment is incomplete (Biegel, 2011). And more often than not, many youngsters [especially with the case of China] are sheltered from the cruel realities of the world.

It’s important to know the reasons why students are struggling than overreacting. When the problems are known, then by talking out these situations, there’s a viable solution to help the students’ lives. Makes for better relationships between students, parents, teachers and administrators.

Suggestions have been addressed to change or follow the Montessori way of education. However, there is still the problem with study times and long days. Because it’s a society which progresses better on the Sciences, Math and Languages than any other. However, it’s a society lacking in basic survival and problem solving skills. Since, most are sheltered/protected from the brutal ways of the world. When problems arise, their automatic solution is to take their lives.

Another issue which arose with the study, that this school village in Guangdong didn’t fit the profile with the rest of China. In most cases, the pressure was affecting the males more than the females. Another factor, in the answers it was stated more talks between children, parents and teachers. There wasn’t a high percentage of complaints about the homework. Also surprising were the number of people which knew a friend or neighbor who had committed suicide. The only thing which remained a constant with the entire country, was that, females thought more about suicide than males.

Therefore, in conclusion, it has been recommended to give less homework during the school

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week. The students with the teacher instructing ought to complete more task during their class times. It was also suggested to implement a talk time about the pressures most students face and help children with the problems of suicide or at least, those contemplating it!

With this in mind, the Chinese school system has to take a long-hard look if they don't want to continue sacrificing their youth--just to achieve an unrealistic goal/expectation. Just to show the world stubbornly that they can.

Because not all are college or genius material. When this reality is fully comprehended, then the Chinese educational programs can start minimizing their study-workload to something more realistic and useful. If not, the problem will continue growing with tragic consequences, indeed.

Following the principle guidelines of the campus. I was authorized by the school to do the study, and some of the leaders expressed the questionnaire/survey below as 'meaningful'. Because this kind of investigation had never been done before, not in the four years since the school was established. Therefore, I was allowed to conduct this Q&A form in a total of 17 days.

In continuation, the reader will see the questionnaire in English and Chinese. Then the answers and this data is demonstrated in percentages.

Suicide Questionnaire in Chinese and English

The study itself was an approach to understand the reasons for suicide. Those studied were between the ages of 13 to 34-years old. Principally, the majority of those surveyed were either teachers or students (in their majority) from a high school in Guangdong Province, China.

This eight-question survey was totally anonymous. The answers were done in strict confidentiality and once they finished the questionnaire, it was either explained to the teacher or students, that this was done to accumulate empirical data, percentages and information. When they finished the questions, they would cutout the bottom portion which stated, 'Facts'. The portion stated what was occurring in China and advice on how to get help. Once the study concluded, the subjects were also told, the questionnaires would be either destroyed [if on paper] or deleted when information was turned in via we-chat (text messaging form).

The study took place between October 29 to November 14, 2018, and approximately 134-young-people voluntarily participated in this survey.

关于自杀问卷调查:

这项研究是匿名的，只有在你完完全全自愿的情况下才回答问题。

这样做没有压力或力量。

这是一项帮助人们了解青少年日渐频繁自杀原因的研究,以及其他人如何协助解决问题。

回答以下的问题:

- 1) 你有没有想过自杀?
- 2) 这样念头的频繁几率? 每日, 每周或每月.....
- 3) 你多大了?
- 4) 你会称自己为快乐, 温和还是不快乐的人?
- 5) 当你想到自杀时, 你最关心的是什么? 你是否想过自己的家人或朋友?
- 6) 你曾经有过朋友, 家人或你认识的人这样结束过自己的生命吗?
- 7) 家长, 老师或学校应该如何帮助学生解决自杀问题?
- 8) 你是男孩还是女孩?

事实:

- 1) 女性自杀的人数高于男性。
- 2) 中国是世界上自杀率最高的国家, 不仅仅是因为人口过剩;但自 20 世纪 70 年代末以来, 中国的自杀率一直在稳步上升。
- 3) 在中国自杀的人数最多的年龄段是 15 至 34 岁。
- 4) 如果你有想伤害自己的念头, 请不要冲动行事! 与家长, 老师或辅导员交谈。你是青春之花, 是希望本身, 永远都有最美好的明天。
- 5) 有关该主题的更多信息, 请在课后私下与具有经验的教师或同事交谈。总会有办法来解决每一个问题。请记得, 你有被家人, 朋友和同事所爱着! 你在这

个世界上是独一无二的存在!

Suicide questionnaire's answers, tables, percentages & contact information

Suicide Questionnaire:

This study is anonymous and only answer the questions if you desire.

There's no pressure or force to do so.

This is a study to help people understand what are the causes of suicide in this young generation ('Y' and millennial generations) and how can others assist in curving the problem.

Answer the following questions:

- 1) Have you ever thought about suicide?

Table 1

| | <i>Thinking about suicide</i> | <i>Never thinking about suicide</i> | <i>Didn't understand</i> |
|----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Females: | 58.46% | 41.54% | |
| Males: | 63.77% | 34.78% | 1.45% |

- 2) How many times have you thought about it? Daily/weekly or monthly...

Table 2

| | <i>Daily/weekly</i> | <i>Monthly</i> | <i>Years</i> |
|----------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Females: | 32.31% | 10.77% | 15.38% |
| Males: | 30.43% | 15.94% | 17.40% |

- 3) How old are you?

Table 3

| | <i>Ages</i> | | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Females: | 13 1.54% | 14 21.54% | 15 24.62% | 16 15.40% | 17 23.08% | 18 4.62% |
| | 22 1.54% | 24 1.54% | 25 1.54% | 26 3.08% | 27 1.54% | *Misunderstood question |
| Males: | 14 24.64% | 15 23.20% | 16 17.40% | 17 21.74% | 18 7.25% | 27 1.45% |
| | 31 1.45% | 32 1.45% | 33 1.45% | | | |

*Person or persons understood: 'How old were you?'

4) Would you call yourself a happy, moderate or unhappy person?

Table 4

| | <i>Happy</i> | <i>Moderate</i> | <i>Unhappy</i> | <i>Didn't answer or wrote 'No'</i> |
|----------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Females: | 35.38% | 52.31% | 12.31% | |
| Males: | 36.23% | 50.72% | 5.80% | 7.25% |

5) What's your biggest concern when you think about suicide? Do you think about self, loved ones, family or friends?

Table 5

| | <i>Family</i> | <i>Self</i> | <i>Never thought about it</i> | <i>Didn't answer</i> | <i>Friends</i> | <i>Wasn't sure</i> |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Females: | 50.77% | 24.62% | 13.85% | 7.70% | 1.54% | |
| <i>how to answer</i> | | | | | 1.54% | |
| Males: | 46.38% | 14.50% | 17.40% | 7.25% | 2.90% | |
| | <i>Loved ones (e.g. girlfriends)</i> | <i>Explained suicide</i> | <i>Money</i> | <i>*'I don't know'</i> | | |
| | 5.80% | 2.90% | 1.45% | 1.45% | | |

*Person or persons answered 'I don't know'.

6) Have you ever had a friend, family member or somebody you know take his/her own life?

Table 6

| | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>Didn't answer</i> |
|----------|------------|-----------|----------------------|
| Females: | 26.15% | 73.85% | |
| Males: | 33.33% | 63.77% | 2.90% |

7) How can parents, teachers or schools help their students with the problems of suicide?

Table 7

| | <i>Give understanding, love, etc.</i> | <i>Nobody could help</i> | <i>Less homework</i> |
|----------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Females: | 58.46% | 16.92% | 12.31% |
| | <i>Psychological help</i> | <i>Fix by themselves</i> | <i>Answered, 'No'</i> |
| | 6.15% | 4.62% | 1.54% |
| | <i>Talks and confidence building</i> | <i>Nobody could help</i> | <i>Less homework</i> |
| Males: | 46.38% | 14.49% | 5.80% |
| | <i>Psychological help</i> | * ¹ <i>No idea</i> | <i>Answered, 'No'</i> |
| | 11.59% | 8.70% | 2.90% |
| | <i>Didn't answer question</i> | <i>Not interested in suicide</i> | * ² <i>Private</i> |
| | 4.35% | 4.35% | 1.45% |

*¹Person or persons didn't have an idea on what to do or what should be done.

*²Persons or persons indicated that the issue was a private matter between child and parents.

8) Are you a boy/girl or man/woman?

Table 8

| <i>Females answered</i> | <i>Males answered</i> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 48.50% | 51.50% |

Facts:

- 1) Most often, people kill themselves in China from jumping off buildings.
- 2) Females kill themselves in higher number than males.
- 3) China has the highest suicide rate in the world, not only because of overpopulation; but China's suicide rate has been steadily increasing since the late 1970s.
- 4) The highest number of people killing themselves in China are between 15 to 34-years of age.
- 5) If you want to hurt yourself, please don't! Talk to a parent, teacher or counselor. You are in the flower of youth. There's always a better tomorrow.
- 6) For more information about this topic, please talk privately to a teacher or colleague with experience after class. There's always a way, a solution to every problem. Remember, you are loved by family, friends and colleagues! You are unique in this world. There's nobody else like you!

Contact information numbers shown in the class:

1) Mainland China

a. *Beijing Suicide Research & Prevention Center: 800-810-1117 or 010-8295-1332*

2) Hong Kong, S.A.R., China

a. *The Samaritans*

Hotline: +852 28 960 000/2696 0000

Website: samaritans.org.hk

E-mail Helpline: jo@samaritans.org.hk

24-Hour service

b. *Suicide Prevention Services, Hong Kong*

Hotline: +852 2382 0000 (24-hours)/2382 2007

Website: sps.org.hk

Hours: Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun: 00:00 – 23:00

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