

Preface

In the light of recent developments, with suicide emerging as major global health concern, the worth of an individual's life appears to be deprecating. In the current scenario, it has been estimated that every 40 seconds, one person in the world dies by committing suicide. By the year 2020, the WHO estimates that approximately 1.53 million deaths may occur by suicide with the rate for suicide attempts increasing by 10–20 times that leads to the inference of one death every 20 seconds and one attempt every 1–2 seconds on an average. Thus, the phenomenon emerges as an alarming affair that warrants greater attention.

The need to create awareness, greater understanding and prevention of this construct has congregated the interests of researchers and practitioners worldwide. Suicidology has driven the field of research and has diversified across the globe. The phenomenon has been viewed from the lens of various theoretical perspectives, cultural contexts, assessment measures and identification of people at-risk, prevention and intervention. However, with progressive advances within the field, the construct needs to be defined as it should be understood with the evolving times. *The Handbook of Suicidal Behaviour* strives towards providing state-of-the-art research and development within the field of suicidology. It endeavours to impart a holistic overview of the phenomena of suicidal behaviour, accounting for its underlying dynamics from various trajectories, vulnerable groups, applications and implications for management and prevention.

The Handbook of Suicidal Behaviour has been methodically classified into three parts. Part I, “Deconstructing the Phenomenon of Suicide”, addresses suicidality from various theoretical standpoints and provides a contextual overview of the same. The Handbook is introduced with a chapter on *Theorizing Suicide: Multiple Perspectives and Implications for Prevention* (Chap. 1) by Mukherjee and Kumar, with an attempt towards elucidating upon the major theoretical underpinnings of the multidimensional phenomenon of suicide. Alongside, we have critically analysed the efficacy of the existing frameworks of suicidal behaviour, discussing the specificities and the generalities across research within this field. The following two chapters, *Suicide in Ancient Hindu Scriptures: Condemned or Glorified?* (Chap. 2) and *“To Life”: Biblical Narratives, Positive Psychology and Suicide-Prevention*

(Chap. 3), provide a comprehensive discourse on understanding suicide from the viewpoint of ancient Hindu, Biblical and Graeco-Roman scriptures. Nruham explores the complexity of suicide from the *Upnishads*, the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagvad Gita*, juxtaposed against the backdrop of modern Indian culture and laws in the former. The discussion on ancient scriptures is taken forward in the latter by Kaplan and Cantz who endeavour to draw a comparison between biblical and Graeco-Roman narratives regarding risk factors associated with suicide. The authors have suggested therapeutic ways in which biblical narratives could be employed for promoting health and well-being, thereby building upon the existing approaches to intervention for suicidal behaviour within the field.

Genetics of Suicidal Behaviour (Chap. 4) has been examined by Wang and Dwivedi, highlighting the recent developments in molecular genetic approaches to suicide prevention. Progressing further into understanding the conceptual basics of suicidal behaviour, *Impulsivity, Decision-Making and Their Role in Suicidal Behaviour* (Chap. 5) by Gvion and Apter, focuses upon the interaction of impulsivity and decision-making against the backdrop of suicidal behaviour. In the light of existing literature, the authors attempt towards drawing a distinction between the two constructs alongside other variables that mediate suicidal behaviour with emphasis upon high-lethal suicide attempts. *Gender Disparities, Mental Health Complexities and Social Connectedness: Exploring an Integrative Approach Towards Suicidal Behaviour* (Chap. 6) by Archana and Kumar deliberates upon gender differences and mental health issues across behaviours related to suicide. We attempt towards highlighting social connectedness as an instrumental protective factor against associated risks of suicide.

With reference to specific contexts, the next chapter by Salman, Camit and Bongar on *Suicide as a Response to Trauma* (Chap. 7) explores different types of trauma and its co-morbidity with suicidal behaviour. Furthermore, the authors delve into culturally influenced forms of trauma from the lens of suicidal behaviour. Emphasizing on the contextualized understanding, Dechesne and Bandt-Law provide a comprehensive synthesis of recent empirical evidence that facilitates towards understanding mechanisms influencing the path of suicide terrorism in their chapter *Suicide Terrorism* (Chap. 8). Furthering the deliberations on suicide terrorism, *The Communication of Suicide Terrorism* (Chap. 9) by Matusitz, illuminates five different ways of communication, namely the weapon of mass persuasion, non-verbal communication, the martyrdom video, the expression of social status and the culture of death. The author cites thorough explanation of these ways of communication, providing in-depth examples for the same.

Advancing towards exploring the *Risk Appraisal and Vulnerable Groups* in suicidology, Barnes, Nazem, Monteith and Bahraini introduce Part II of the Handbook in chapter on *Suicidal Crises: The Clinical and Research Implications of Overlooking the Role of Suicidal Reactivity* (Chap. 10) that examines suicidal reactivity as a trans-theoretical and trans-diagnostic construct relevant to the field as a whole citing important scholastically drawn evidence. The authors also attempt to review assessment measures relevant to suicidal reactivity, shedding light upon research on the objective assessment of reactivity and avenues for further research.

The chapter on *Lethal Means Restriction: Historical, International, and Professional Considerations* (Chap. 11) by Bongar, Lockwood, Spangler and Cowell provides an overview on current lethal means restriction data to better-inform risk assessment procedures for patients from diverse backgrounds. The authors also aim at equipping mental health professionals with improved risk assessment procedures for effective prevention.

Progressing towards understanding the factors involved in facilitating suicidal behaviour, the chapter by Shelef, Korem and Zalsman illustrates *Dissociation and Habituation as a Facilitating Processes Among Suicide Behaviours* (Chap. 12). With emphasis on the role of facilitating factors, namely dissociation and habituation and their relationship to suicidal behaviour, the authors also discuss underlying dynamics and its influence leading to increased probability of suicidal behaviour. Hosseini, Walsh and Brown extend the discourse further by deliberating upon *Indirect Self-destructive Behaviours Across the Lifespan* (Chap. 13). They conceptually delineate the indirect life-threatening behaviour and its role with suicidal behaviour. With the same line of thought, the authors also provide a critical appraisal of the existing body of literature on indirect self-destructive behaviours and its implications for research, clinical practice and policy-making.

From a contextual perspective, the chapter on *Suicidal Behaviour Among Black Males Differ from Recognized Behaviour in Other High Risk Groups: A Review* (Chap. 14) by Barnes and Godfrey emphasizes the role of specific cultures in understanding suicidal behaviour. She puts forth a comprehensive review on the prevalence of lacunae in the existing literature in the light of suicide prevention in high-risk communities. *Suicidal Ideation in Adolescents—A Transcultural Analysis* (Chap. 15) by Rozanov and Rakhimkulova attempts at understanding the phenomenon of suicide among adolescents across cultures and identifying the possible associated risk factors and peculiarities across societies. The authors briefly try to sum up various protective factors for adolescents with suicidal behaviour and suggest possible preventive measures and intervention strategies as well. Moving further in understanding this phenomenon across various vulnerable groups, Pandey, Prasad, Mishra, Garg and Mishra emphasize upon an often overlooked area of gerontology in order to discuss the risk factors and the causes that influences the decision of suicide, in their chapter *Geriatric Population: Suicide as a Road to Relief or to Release* (Chap. 16). They suggest effective preventive measures for management of suicidal behaviours among elderly people as well with regard to the factors, the conditions and the psyche of the elderly people who attempt suicide.

Veeraraghavan reviews and provides a comprehensive synthesis of empirical studies delineating the complexity of the relationship between suicidal behaviour and substance abuse in her chapter *Substance Abuse and Suicidal Behaviour* (Chap. 17). She summarizes the existing de-addiction and rehabilitation methods for drug addiction emphasizing on the importance of an interdisciplinary approach towards intervention to overcome and control the extent of the problem. In the light of understanding the associated risk factors of pharmacological intervention in treatment of depressed patients, Courtet, Nobile and Lopez-Castroman exemplify the increased risk of suicidal behaviour in their chapter *Antidepressants and Suicide*

Risk: Harmful or Useful? (Chap. 18). The authors review contemporary approaches for treatment that targets the biological systems involved in the pathophysiology of suicidal behaviour.

Moving ahead in understanding the intricacies in the relationship between personality and suicide, the chapter by Smith, Vidovic, Sherry and Saklofske on *Self-oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism Add Incrementally to the Prediction of Suicide Ideation Beyond Hopelessness: A Meta-Analysis of 15 Studies* (Chap. 19) predicts perfectionism as one of the traits that increases vulnerability of suicidal behaviour from a meta-analytic viewpoint. Evolving from a similar perspective, the chapter on *Personality Profiles of Suicide Ideators, Attempters, Completers and Suicide Note Writers Versus Non-writers* (Chap. 20) by Misra and Ghanekar presents a comprehensive deduction of risk factors that predispose an individual towards attempting suicide and suicidal ideation. The authors attempt at exemplifying the personality profiles of Suicide Ideators, Attempters, Completers and Suicide Note Writers and Non-Writers for effective crises management. Moving further towards understanding suicide among vulnerable groups, the chapter on *Chronic Suicidality and Personality Disorders* (Chap. 21) by Khanna, Sinha, Khanna, Moyal and Jha elucidates upon the psychosocial correlates of chronic suicidal ideation from various trajectories. The authors also unveil newer approaches for management and intervention for chronic suicidal ideation in patients with personality disorders.

To a large extent, the act of suicide does not solely affect the individual engaging in the behaviour, but also the people around their environment. The following two chapters delve into understanding the impact of suicide upon survivors of suicide. Saha, Ahuja, Harsheeta and I attempt at addressing the issues associated with the phenomenon of suicide bereavement and plausible interventions for the same in our chapter *Those Left Behind...: The Process of Bereavement for Suicide Survivors and Postvention* (Chap. 22). We have propounded a model to explicate the various factors that influence the process and outcome of bereavement for suicide survivors and explicate effective postvention strategies for suicide bereaved families. In lines of this theme, the chapter by Gow on *Solidarity in Times of Existential Crises in a Quantum World: Mapping Concepts and Weaving Field Narratives of Tragic Loss to Guide Those Left Behind* (Chap. 23) discusses the multidisciplinary, multi-modal aspects of forced or free choices to end life in specific circumstances. The author explains the factors associated with suicide through life narratives and stories woven around normal life experience illuminating the annihilation of spirit that occurs in long droughts and the black hole experience of Internet bullying. The chapter explicates and concludes, a newer avenue for suicide survivors, as it paves a way for them to move ahead with their existence, when no others means of undoing the past is possible.

After a thorough reflection upon risk appraisal and the vulnerable groups in suicidology from various trajectories, Part III of the Handbook is dedicated towards *Prevention, Intervention and Beyond*. Apart from the pursuit of enlightening the readers on prevention of suicidal behaviour, approaches to intervention strategies, this part aims at providing a fresh outlook towards management of suicidal

tendencies through a multidimensional perspective, set in various scenarios and contexts. The chapter on *Spirituality, Religion and Suicide: French Findings* (Chap. 24) by Mandhouj explores spirituality and religiousness as important resources of coping against suicidal tendencies. The author cites current research evidences that exemplify the link between spirituality and mental diseases and addictions, highlighting the need to consider spirituality in the treatment of patients in severe conditions. Bringing in the importance of crises intervention in the suicide prevention, the chapter on *Crisis Theory and Intervention Strategies as a Way to Mitigate Suicide Risk* (Chap. 25) by Séguin and Chawky emphasizes the efficacy of existing models of crises intervention in prevention of suicide. The authors also provide a critical appraisal using empirical evidence of the existing models of interventions and preventive measures from a meta-theoretical perspective. Barnes, Smith, Monteith, Gerber and Bahraini explicate the efficacy of acceptance and commitment therapy for suicide risk assessment and management in their chapter *ACT for Life: Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to Understand and Prevent Suicide* (Chap. 26). The authors try to illustrate ACT as an intervention through case examples, delineating the aetiology of suicidal thoughts and behaviours according to the ACT model of psychological (in)flexibility. Furthermore, they attempt at reviewing and synthesizing the extant literature relevant to this etiological model and discuss implications for suicide risk assessment and key considerations for using ACT to manage suicide risk. In line with existing approaches to intervention, Ibrahim, Russon and Diamond extend the horizons of intervention in their chapter *Attachment-Based Family Therapy for Depressed and Suicidal Adolescents: Development, Research and Clinical Practice* (Chap. 27) that focuses on attachment-based family therapy as an approach aimed at improving the capacity for problem-solving, affect regulation and organization while considering associated biological factors for families of adolescents with depression and suicidal behaviours. The authors bring in effective strategies that build upon and strengthen familial relationships between adolescents through the lens of this therapeutic approach.

Deliberating upon a very significant but a diverse fraction of population, Bonger, Hausman and Agin-Liebes illustrate the Special Operation Forces as a vulnerable group manifesting suicidal behaviour in their chapter *Addressing Suicides in Special Operations Forces: Enhancing Resilience in a Unique Population* (Chap. 28). In a conventional assumption that SOF individuals are particularly resistant to physical and psychological strain, empirical research focused upon the psychological impact of deployment on this specific population with recent data suggesting a stark rise in suicide rates among its special force members over recent years. In this regard, the authors critically evaluate the efficacy of FBI's Hostage Rescue Team approach and Preservation of the Force and Family programme in building resilience. Summing up the Handbook, the last chapter by Maslowski, Vescera and Bonger discusses potential risk factors of suicide in active duty veterans in the USA. Their chapter *Innovations in Military and Veteran Suicide Prevention* (Chap. 29) also emphasizes the military context and provides tailored

suicide prevention strategies and identification of risk factors that could facilitate the reduction of veteran suicide.

The compendium of writings is intended to provide an insightful read on various facets and related constructs of suicidology by eminent scholars from diverse disciplines, enhancing the plethora of knowledge of the reader. The conceptual deliberations and the underlying dynamics brought forth in Part I of the Handbook focus on the changing trends in the field of suicidology, along with fresh perspectives regarding theoretical underpinnings supported by current empirical evidences. Part II on risk appraisal and vulnerable groups goes beyond the conventional account of assessment and at-risk population-related elucidations, engaging the reader into understanding the layers of suicide from a different lens, a different context and a different theoretical standpoint. It delves further into certain implicit issues associated with the multifaceted nature of suicidal behaviour and provides a comprehensive understanding of the same. This Handbook aims to address the void in the existing literature on suicidal behaviour since it brings to the foreground, intricacies of suicidal behaviour that traditionally have been given scant consideration but merit greater reflection. Application of various existing theoretical frameworks and approaches towards management of suicidal behaviour in a vast range of domains has been enumerated along with wide-ranging empirical research, paradigmatically established evidences in Part III of the Handbook. An essential source of reference for the reader, in the field of suicidology, with insightful perspectives on current issues, cultural contexts and relevant frameworks across the globe, Part III elucidates prevention, intervention and management of suicidal behaviour that facilitates prevention of suicidal behaviour and promote well-being of an individual.

This Handbook is a dedicated attempt towards bringing together aspects that are often overlooked and, thus, add to the existing core body of knowledge on suicidal behaviour. With dedicated contributions from eminent scholars, scientists and academicians worldwide, in exploring the multifaceted nature of suicidal behaviour, the proposed Handbook will be of interest to novices and experts alike in the field of psychology and a valuable resource for mental health professionals, educators and policy makers globally in building a happier community.

The making of a comprehensive Handbook is a gruelling task that unquestionably demands unyielding dedication given the vast area of knowledge in the field of suicidology. I would like to express my indebtedness to each and everyone who have devoted their time and effort towards the successful completion of this mammoth endeavour. My heartfelt appreciation to all the renowned authors for their exemplary writings, which have enormously enhanced the eminence of this Handbook. This enterprise would not be successful without the enormous support and efforts of Ms. Shinjini Chatterjee, Senior Editor at Springer Nature.

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