SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE AND ADMINISTRATION OF TOOLS

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CHAPTER 4

SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE AND ADMINISTRATION OF TOOLS
Selection of the sample and administration of tools

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Study Sample

The sample for the study consisted of 50 suicide attempters and 50 normal subjects. Suicide attempters were those admitted to different departments of Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode. This hospital is a tertiary referral centre, which caters the needs of six districts viz. Kohikode, Waynad, Malappuram, Kannur, Kasaragod and Palakkad. These patients were interviewed within the first week of their admission to the hospital. Patients below the age of 18 years were excluded from this study. Patients whose physical condition did not allow detailed evaluation were excluded from study. Whenever possible relatives, friends and other possible source of information were also interviewed for eliciting further information. No other criteria were entertained to exclude patients in this study.

Age, sex and marital status matched normal subjects formed the comparison group. The age was matched by grouping the age at 5 years intervals. These subjects were initially screened by GHQ-12 version to exclude the presence of common mental disorders. Those who scored (out off score 2/3 mode) were excluded from the control group.

Administration of the Tests

The tests were administered individually. After explaining the purpose of the study, an informal consent was taken from each subject before participating in the study procedure. While testing maximum care was taken to avoid the presence of others and external distractions. Since a
significant proportion was not physically fit to read different questionnaires each one was verbally administered to all subjects to ensure uniformity. After giving the general information, the personal details were collected in socio-demographic proforma. The questionnaires were given one by one at random order to avoid hallowing effect with specific instructions needed for answering the items in each test. Administration procedures for various tests are given below.

**Social Support Scale**

The subjects were instructed as follows-

This test is to see how you perceive the supports given by your family, other relatives, friends, the neighbours around and the government etc. Your ability to support yourself is also measured by this. There are 39 statements. Read them carefully, if you agree with the statement, put ‘✓’ mark against each item in the column. Kindly answer all the statements. Please do not take too much time for a single statement. Your answers will be kept secret and will be used only for research purposes.

**Presumptive Stressful Life Event Scale**

The experimenter illustrated the method of responding to the statements with the help of example given at the top of this scale. On completion of the scale the subject was instructed to proceed with one of the remaining scale in random order.

The instructions given in the facing sheet of the inventory were read out to the subject. The instructions were given as follows. “Given below is a list of common life events which are experienced by almost everyone at some time or other in their life. Kindly put tick mark ‘✓’ against those events that you may have experienced during the past 6 months in column
1 and those you have experienced at any time prior to that in your life is column 2”.

The investigator illustrates the procedure with the help of example items. He also cleared of the doubts, if any, while answering.

**AECOM – Coping Style Scale**

The instructions given in the facing sheet of this scale were read out to the subject. The instructions were given as follows. ‘here is a list of statements describing how people behave in different situations or how they feel about various things. Please indicate how often each statement describes your behaviour or feelings by putting a check in the appropriate space”. The investigator illustrated the procedure with the help of example items. He also cleared the doubts if any, while answering.

**WHOQOL Bref**

The instruction given in the facing sheet of inventory was read out to the subjects. This was as follows “this assessment asks how you feel about your quality of life, health and other areas of your life. Please answer all the questions. If you are unsure about which responses to give to a question, please choose the one that appears most appropriate. This can often be your first response”.

Please keep in mind your standards, hopes, pleasure and concerns. We ask that you think about your life in the last 2 weeks. You should circle the number showing the response that best fits in the appropriate column against each statement.

The experimenter illustrates the method of responding to the statements with the help of example given in the facing sheet of inventory.
Scoring Procedure

The scoring of each test was done with the help of the scoring keys.

Social Support Scale

In the social support scale the statements marked as positive perception was given a score of 4 or 3 depending on the degree of agreement and a score of 2 or 1 was given for negative perception. Maximum possible score is 156 and minimum is 39. High score shows good social support and a low score indicates poor social support.

Presumptive Stressful Life Event Scale

For each life event a mean stress score starting from 95 for highest to 20 for the least stressful event is assigned in this scale. Summing up of the individual score of events experienced for lifetime and within 6 months yielded the total score for life term and within 6 months. Similarly the total number of life events, number of desirable, undesirable, ambiguous, personal and impersonal life events and the weighted score for these categories were calculated separately.

AECOM Coping Scale

For categorize AECOM coping scale scores obtained on the 4-point scale was categorized to different subheading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimisation</td>
<td>1,9,17,25,33,41,49,57,67,79,84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppression</td>
<td>2,10,18,26,34,42,50,58,66,73,80,85,87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help seeking</td>
<td>3,11,19,27,35,43,51,59,67,74,81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Replacement  4,12,20,28,36,44,52,60,68,75,82,86
Blame  5,13,21,29,37,45,53,61,69,76
Satisfactory  6,14,22,30,38,46,54,62,70,77,83
Mapping  7,15,23,31,39,47,55,63
Reversal  8,16,24,32,40,48,56,64,71,78

The total raw score on each scale was converted to percentile based in the norms available with the scale.

WHOQOL Bref

The responses given by the subject on the 5-point scale on different domains was summed up to obtain the raw score of concerned domains. It was calculated as follows:

**Domain 1:** Q3+Q4+Q10+Q15+Q16+Q17+Q18 (Physical health and well being)

**Domain 2:** Q5+Q6+Q7+Q11+Q19+Q26 (Psychological health and well being)

**Domain 3:** Q20+Q21+Q22 (Social relations)

**Domain 4:** Q8+Q9+Q12+Q13+Q14+Q23+Q24+Q25 (Environment)

The raw score in each domain was converted to transformed scores based on the norm available with the manual.