Chapter 22

Adolescent Suicides as a Chaotic Phenomenon

Halime Güngör

Hacettepe University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

The adolescence period includes complexity in human beings physically, psychologically, emotionally, mentally, and socially; due to personality building up and efforts to be individual, it is the most chaotic period of human life. There are some individuals who have had turmoil in their childhood period or cannot get over the chaos of adolescence and also cannot transform chaos to order: adolescent depression and suicide fact is a fact. In this chapter, suicide rates of adolescents are analyzed on the basis of countries and regions among 5-14 years and 15-24 years by gender. Adolescence suicides as a chaotic phenomenon have been explored in detail with the help of this research which was conducted by qualitative research methods through suicide rates analysis. In this qualitative research, it is pointed out that the trigger aspect of the suicidal experience of the adolescents is the family and social environment. Finally, the study has pointed out the importance of family training and splashes of collective consciousness in the community.

INTRODUCTION

Suicide phenomenon is as old as human history (Alptekin, 2008). During the last quarter of the last century, suicide among young people has emerged as a major global public health problem (Bridge, Goldstein & Brent, 2006). Various studies have pointed out excessive increase in child and adolescent suicidal attempts during the last 15-20 years, because of this, educators as well as psychologists and psychiatrists have been worried (Suvarlı, 1995).

Adolescence period as a second crisis process, (first is birth) influences everyone socially, physically, mentally, spiritual, psychologically and all aspects of human life. So, some youths cannot cope with their problems in this period and then they can find “suicide” as a solution. Unfortunately, this is a global reality. In this study, the suicide rates of adolescents have been analyzed on the
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basis of countries and regions among 5-14 years and 15-24 years by gender and also suicide rates of Turkey by age and gender according to the last ten years. Adolescent suicides as a chaotic phenomenon have been explored in detail by the help of this research which was conducted by qualitative research methods through suicide rates analysis. Finally suggestions were given to prevent suicide among adolescents.

BACKGROUND

Suicide is a broad term which gathers behavioral patterns such as suicidal tendencies, suicide attempt and suicide in a direct or indirect manner; suicide attempt can be defined as any method which can lead a person to death whether used by an individual without the guidance of somebody during casual life conditions or the attempt was not completed with death (Alptekin 2008). Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to adulthood (Kulaksızoğlu, 2002). Besides, according to some authors adolescence is the second birth; birth is a transition from fetus to new born, likewise adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood (Parman, 2003).

Chaos is the order of irregularities in the non-linear complex structure, irregular pattern has been characterized by chaos is the non-linear, highly complex and variable structure (Yeşilorman, 2006). According to Erçetin (2001), chaos is the emergence of order from disorder. When considering individuals from chaos theory; chaos can be defined as individual’s getting out of the daily routine in spiritual, mental, physical, emotional or existing in another dimension of life, and also domination of uncertainty as well as instability to an individual.

Though chaos dominates every individual’s life at times, every normal and healthy individual can endeavor to get over this period with the least damage. Long, painful, difficult and complex periods have been sometimes in every individual’s life span but adolescence is a very problematic period which has been experienced by every individual. Adolescence is a challenging period in which the children describe themselves as an individual for the first time, define their identity which they consider valid until the next crisis (midlife crisis) and also have to fight in many areas (Parman, 2003). Periods which can be defined as crisis, depression and transition are chaotic, because not only organizations’ but also individual’s lives are affected and complicated in all aspects.

Psychoanalytic view has argued that adolescence period which has been defined as a transition period from childhood to adulthood is the most difficult process in human life span (Graber, Petersen & Brooks-Gunn, 1996). Firstly, children’s bodies start to change during adolescence. Body changes during adolescence, child’s body disappears and thus the adolescent has to rediscover, describe and accept his/her changing body (Parman, 2003). New body, new thought system, the process of freedom and awareness of sexual identity, and then adolescents find themselves in a vortex. They have to reinterpret every dimension of life which has been progressing in their own routine with a new viewpoint; and also have to reorganize and recreate themselves. In this sense, we can say that people are self-organizing systems and adolescence period is a chaotic and complex process in human life span.

When natural systems have reached a critical level of instability, in other words, when they have processed effectively without a systematic balance and have not fallen into a dead end of chaos, they form a new structure which is excessively complex and stable in a creative way (Erçetin, 2001). Every normal and healthy individual overcomes the adolescence chaos and creates a new order from chaos, in a sense, skips into adulthood in a healthy way.

Furthermore, adolescence means self-questioning, adolescence as a physical and spiritual
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