CHAPTER – 2
SUICIDES IN INDIA

Each suicide is a personal tragedy that prematurely takes the life of an individual and has a continuing ripple effect, affecting the lives of families, friends and communities. Every year, more than 1,00,000 people commit suicide in our country. There are various causes of suicides like professional/career problems, sense of isolation, abuse, violence, family problems, mental disorders, addiction to alcohol, financial loss, chronic pain etc. NCRB collects data on suicides from police recorded suicide cases.

Rate of suicides has been calculated using projected population for the non-census years whereas for the census year 2011, the population in the Census 2011 Report was used.

A total of 1,64,033 suicides were reported in the country during 2021 showing an increase of 7.2% in comparison to 2020 and the rate of suicides has increased by 6.2% during 2021 over 2020. [LIST–2.1] The incidence and rate of suicides during 2010-2021 is presented in Table-2.1.

LIST–2.1
Number of Suicides, Growth of Population and Rate of Suicides during 2017 - 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Suicides</th>
<th>Mid-Year Projected Population (in Lakh*)</th>
<th>Rate of Suicides (Col.3/Col.4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1,29,887</td>
<td>13091.6#</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>1,34,516</td>
<td>13233.8#</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1,39,123</td>
<td>13376.1#</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>1,53,052</td>
<td>13533.9$</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>1,64,033</td>
<td>13671.8$</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


+ One Lakh = 0.1 Million

*** Rate of Suicides = Incidence of suicides per one lakh (1, 00,000) of population.

As per data provided by States/UTs
Number and Percentage Share of Suicides in States/UTs

The State/UT and City wise information on the incidents of suicides, its percentage share in total suicides and rate of suicides during the year are presented in Table–2.2.

Majority of suicides were reported in Maharashtra (22,207) followed by 18,925 suicides in Tamil Nadu, 13,500 suicides in West Bengal and 13,056 suicides in Karnataka accounting for 13.5%, 11.5%, 9.1%, 8.2% and 8.0% of total suicides respectively. These 5 States together accounted for 50.4% of the total suicides reported in the country. The remaining 49.6% suicides were reported in the remaining 23 States and 8 UTs. Uttar Pradesh, the most populous State (16.9% share of country population) has reported comparatively lower percentage share of suicidal deaths, accounting for only 3.6% of the total suicides reported in the country.

The States which have witnessed significantly higher number of suicidal deaths during the year 2019 to 2021 are presented in the LIST–2.2. Each of these States have continuously accounted for about 8.0% or more of the total suicides reported in the country from 2019 to 2021.

FIGURE–2.1

State/UT wise Major Percentage Share of Suicides in States during 2021

- As per data provided by States/UTs.

Note: OTHER STATES/UTs include Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, A & N Island, Chandigarh, D & N Havelli & Daman & Diu, Jammu & Kashmir, Delhi, Ladakh, Lakshadweep and Puducherry
Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2021

As per data provided by States/UTs.

FIGURE 2.2
STATE/UT – WISE TOTAL NUMBER OF SUICIDES DURING 2021
Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2021

LIST–2.2
States with Higher Percentage Share of Suicides during 2019 to 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>(13.6%)</td>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>(13.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>(9.7%)</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>(11.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>(9.1%)</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>(9.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>(9.0%)</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>(8.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>(8.1%)</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>(8.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- As per data provided by States/UTs.

Delhi, which is the most-populous UT, has reported the highest number of suicides (2,840) among UTs, followed by Puducherry (504). A total of 25,891 suicides were reported in the 53 mega cities of the country during the 2021.

The States and UTs which have reported higher percentage increase in suicides in 2021 over 2020 were Telangana (26.2%), Uttar Pradesh (23.5%), Puducherry (23.5%) , Andhra Pradesh (14.5%), Kerala (12.3%) , Tamil Nadu (12.1%), Maharashtra (11.5%) and Manipur (11.4%) while highest percentage decrease was reported in Lakshadweep (50.0%), Uttarakhand (24.0%), Jharkhand (15.0%) , Jammu & Kashmir (13.9%) and A & N Islands (11.7%) [Table–2.3, Figure-2.3].

Rate of Suicides — Trend in States/UTs

Rate of suicides i.e. the number of suicides per one lakh population, has been widely accepted as a standard yardstick for comparison. All India rate of suicides was 12.0 during the year 2021. A & N Islands reported the highest rate of suicide (39.7) followed by Sikkim (39.2), Puducherry (31.8), Telangana (26.9) and Kerala (26.9) [Figure-2.4]. The details of States/UTs which have recorded higher rate of suicides during 2019 to 2021 are given in LIST–2.3.

FIGURE–2.3

State/UT-wise Percentage Variation in Suicides during 2021 over 2020

- As per data provided by States/UTs.
As per data provided by States/UTs.
FIGURE 2.5
STATE/UT - WISE SUICIDE RATE DURING 2021

Note:
Suicide Rate means Number of Suicides per One Lakh population.

- As per data provided by States/UTs.
Causes of Suicides

‘Family Problems’ and ‘Illness’ were the major causes of suicides which accounted for 33.2% and 18.6% of total suicides respectively during 2021. ‘Drug Abuse/Alcoholic Addiction’ (6.4%), ‘Marriage Related Issues’ (4.8%), ‘Love Affairs’ (4.6%), ‘Bankruptcy or Indebtedness’ (3.9%), ‘Unemployment’ (2.2%) , ‘Failure in Examination’ (1.0%), ‘Professional/Career Problem’ (1.6%) and ‘Poverty’ (1.1%) were other causes of suicides [Table–2.4].

* Figure of Suicides due to ideological causes/hero worshiping, physical abuse (rape etc.) and illegitimate pregnancy included in Other Causes.

As per data provided by States/UTs.

Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2021 [202]
State and UT wise and City wise details on various causes of suicides are presented in Table-2.5. The States/UTs which reported more than the All-India average share under the two major causes of suicides i.e. ‘Family Problems’ and ‘Illness’ are grouped in the LIST-2.4.

Suicide Victims by Sex and Age Group

Age group wise distribution of suicides by causes during 2021 is presented in Table-2.0. The overall male : female ratio of suicide victims for the year 2021 was 72.5 : 27.4, which is more as compared to year 2020 (70.9 : 29.1). The proportion of female victims were more in ‘Marriage Related Issues’ (specifically in ‘Dowry Related Issues’), and ‘Impotency/Infertility’. The age group (18 - below 30 years) and persons of 30 years - below 45 years of age were the most vulnerable groups resorting to suicides. These age groups accounted for 34.5% and 31.7% suicides respectively. ‘Family Problems’ (3,233), ‘Love Affairs’ (1,495) and ‘Illness’ (1,408) were the main causes of suicides among children (below 18 years of age).

Professional Status of Suicide Victims

Details on professional status of suicide victims are presented in Table-2.6. Housewives accounted for 51.5% of the total female victims (23,179 out of 45,026) and constitute nearly 14.1% of total victims who committed suicides (23,179 out of 1,64,033) during 2021.

Government servants accounted for 1.2% (1,898) as compared to 7.0% (11,431) from Private Sector Enterprises out of 1,64,033 of total victims. Employees from Public Sector Undertakings formed 1.5% (2,541), whereas students and un-employed victims accounted for 8.0% (13,089 victims) and 8.4% (13,714 victims) of total suicides respectively. Self-employed category accounted for 12.3% of total suicide victims (20,231 out of 1,64,033).

A total of 10,881 persons involved in farming sector (consisting of 5,318 farmers/cultivators and 5,563 agricultural labourers) have committed suicides during 2021, accounting for 6.6% of total suicides victims (1,64,033) in the country. Out of 5,318 farmer/cultivator suicides, a total of 5,107 were male and 211 were female.

### LIST-2.4

**States & UTs Reporting Higher Share of Suicides due to Illness and Family Problems during 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>State/UT</th>
<th>Suicides</th>
<th>% Share</th>
<th>State/UT</th>
<th>Suicides</th>
<th>% Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PUNJAB</td>
<td>1164</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ODISHA</td>
<td>4033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SIKKIM</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>TRIPURA</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A &amp; N ISLANDS</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>KERALA</td>
<td>4552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ANDHRA PRADESH</td>
<td>2469</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>HIMACHAL PRADESH</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>TAMIL NADU</td>
<td>5386</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>TELANGANA</td>
<td>4464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>HIMACHAL PRADESH</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>TAMIL NADU</td>
<td>8073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>KARNATAKA</td>
<td>3042</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>BIHAR</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>MIZORAM</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>RAJASTHAN</td>
<td>2270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>GOA</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>CHANDIGARH</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>PUDUCHERRY</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>UTTAR PRADESH</td>
<td>2235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>KERALA</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>ASSAM</td>
<td>1191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>MADHYA PRADESH</td>
<td>3132</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>MAHARASHTRA</td>
<td>7693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>HARYANA</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>GUJARAT</td>
<td>1788</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>TRIPURA</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- As per data provided by States/UTs.

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Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2021 [203]
Out of 5,563 suicides committed by agricultural labourers during 2021, 5,121 were male and 442 were female.

Certain States/UTs namely, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Tripura, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Puducherry reported zero suicides of Farmers/Cultivators as well as Agricultural Labourers.

**FIGURE–2.7**

Suicide Victims by Sex and Age Group during 2021

- As per data provided by States/UTs.

**FIGURE–2.8**

Percentage Distribution of Suicide Victims by Profession During 2021

- As per data provided by States/UTs.
Out of total 1,18,979 male suicides, maximum suicides were committed by daily wage earners (37,751) followed by self-employed persons (18,803) and Unemployed Persons (11,724). A total of 45,026 females committed suicides during 2021 in the country. Of females who committed suicides, highest number (23,178) was of house-wives followed by students (5,693) and daily wage earners (4,246). A total of 28 transgender have committed suicide. Out of 28 transgender, 9 were ‘Unemployed Persons’ and 7 were ‘Daily Wage Earners’, 2 were ‘Self-employed Persons’ and 1 each under ‘House-wives’ and ‘Professional/Salaried Persons’, while 8 fall under ‘Other’ category.

State/UT-wise and profession wise analysis of suicide victims is presented in Table–2.7. Majority of suicides committed by house-wives were reported in Tamil Nadu (3,221 out of 23,179) followed by Madhya Pradesh (3,055 out of 23,179 suicides) and Maharashtra (2,861 suicides) which accounted for 13.9%, 13.2% and 12.3% of total such suicides during 2021 respectively. Majority of suicides committed by government servants were reported in Tamil Nadu (284 out of 1,898 suicides) followed by Maharashtra (225 suicides), Karnataka (160 suicides), Madhya Pradesh (145 suicides) and Rajasthan (125 suicides) which accounted for 15.0%, 11.9%, 8.4%, 7.6% and 6.6% of total such suicides respectively. Majority of suicides committed by persons engaged in Private Sector Enterprises were reported in Maharashtra (2,139 out of 11,431 suicides), Tamil Nadu (1,196 suicides), Karnataka (1,079 suicides), Telangana (952 suicides) and Kerala (900 suicides), they accounted for 18.7%, 10.5%, 9.4%, 8.3% and 7.9% of total such suicides respectively. Of total suicides committed by students, 14.0% were reported in Maharashtra (1,834 suicides out of 13,089) followed by 10.0% in Madhya Pradesh (1,308 suicides), 9.5% in Tamil Nadu (1,246 suicides) and 6.5% in Karnataka (855 suicides). Majority of suicides committed by un-employed persons, 12.6% were in Maharashtra (1,734 out of 13,714 suicides), 12.1% in Tamil Nadu (1,657 suicides), 12.1% in Kerala (1,654 suicides) and 8.2% in Karnataka (1,129 suicides). Majority of suicides committed by persons engaged in business activities were reported by Karnataka (14.3%), Maharashtra (13.2%), Madhya Pradesh (11.3%), Tamil Nadu (9.4%), and Telangana (7.5%). Majority of victims engaged in farming sector were reported in Maharashtra (37.3%), Karnataka (19.9%), Andhra Pradesh (9.8%), Madhya Pradesh (6.2%) and Tamil Nadu (5.5%).

Social Status of Suicide Victims


The information on the social status of suicide victims is presented in Table–2.8(I). It is observed that 66.9% (1,09,749 out of 1,64,033) of the suicide victims were married while 24.0% were un-married (39,421). Widowed/Widower, Divorcees and Separated have accounted for 1.5% (2,485 victims), 0.5% (788 victims) and 0.5% (871 victims) of total suicide victims respectively during 2021.

The State/UT-wise information on the social status of suicide victims is presented in Table–2.9.

Economic Status of Suicide Victims

The information on the economic status of suicide victims is presented in Table–2.8(II). 64.2% (1,05,242) of suicide victims in 2021 were having annual income of less than ₹1 lakh. 31.6% (51,812) of suicide victims belong to annual income group of ₹1 lakh to less than ₹5 lakh. The State/UT wise information on the Economic Status of suicide victims is presented in Table–2.10.

Educational Status of Suicide Victims

The sex-wise and education-wise breakup of suicide victims is presented in Table-2.8(III). The maximum numbers of suicide victims (24.0%) (39,333) were educated up to Matriculation/ Secondary level, whereas Middle level educated accounted for 19.1% (31,404), Primary educated (15.8%) (25,878), Hr. Secondary / Intermediate/Pre-University educated (16.2%) (26,492) and Illiterate (11.0%) (18,018). Only 4.6% (7,613 out of 1,64,033 victims) of total suicide victims were graduates and above.
Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2021

FIGURE 2.9
Distribution of Suicide Victims by Social Status during 2021

- As per data provided by States/UTs.

FIGURE 2.10
Percentage Share of Suicide Victims by Educational Status during 2021

- As per data provided by States/UTs.
The State/UT wise information on the Education Status of suicide victims is presented in Table–2.11.

Out of 39,333 suicides committed by persons educated up-to matriculate/secondary level, 17.8% were reported in Maharashtra followed by Tamil Nadu (11.8%) and Kerala (9.6%). Out of 31,404 suicides committed by persons educated up-to middle level, 13.8% were reported in Maharashtra followed by Tamil Nadu (12.9%) and Madhya Pradesh (10.7%). Out of 18,018 suicides committed by persons with no education 14.2% were reported in Telangana followed by Madhya Pradesh (13.7%) and Tamil Nadu (9.7%) [Table–2.11].

Percentage share of suicide victims by educational level during 2019-21 is presented in LIST–2.5.

Means Adopted for Committing Suicides

The means adopted for committing suicide varied from the easily available and effective means such as consumption of poison, jumping etc. to more painful means such as self-inflicted injuries, hanging etc. Like previous year, ‘Hanging’ (57.0%), consuming ‘Poison’ (25.1%), ‘Drowning’ (5.1%) and ‘Fire/Self-Immolation’ (2.6%) were the prominent means/mode of committing suicide. [Table–2.12]

Percentage share of the means adopted in committing suicide during 2020-21 is presented in LIST–2.6.

As per data provided by States/UTs.

The number of male victims were more than females in all means of suicide except those who committed suicides by ‘Fire/Self-
immolation’ where share of female victims was more (2,435 out of 4,195).

Suicides in Cities

City refers to mega city i.e. city having population of 10,00,000 or more.

The numbers of suicides in 53 mega cities show an increasing trend during 2018 to 2021. It increased by 0.8% (to 21,408) in 2018 and increased by 4.6% (to 22,390) in 2019. It increased by 6.5% (to 23,855) in 2020 and increased by 8.5% (to 25,891) in 2021. Details on year-wise incidents in cities, percentage share to All-India, rate of suicides and percentage change during 2018 - 2021 may be seen in LIST–2.7.

A total of 131 cases of mass/family suicides were registered during the year 2021. In these suicides, a total of 340 persons, comprising of 197 married persons and 143 unmarried persons, lost their lives.

Maximum cases of mass/family suicides were reported in Tamil Nadu (33 cases) followed by Rajasthan (25 cases), Andhra Pradesh (22 cases), Kerala (12 cases) and Karnataka (10 cases) during 2021 with a total 80 persons in Tamil Nadu, 67 persons in Rajasthan, 56 persons in Andhra Pradesh, 31 persons in Karnataka and 26 persons in Kerala losing lives. [Table–2.14]

Out of 53 cities, mass/family suicides were reported in 11 cities. These 11 cities have registered 29 cases of mass/family suicides in which 75 persons have committed suicides during 2021. Among these persons, 44 were married and 31 were unmarried persons. [Table–2.14]

**LIST–2.7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Suicides in Cities</th>
<th>Cities Share to All India</th>
<th>Rate in Cities</th>
<th>% Variation over Previous Year (Incidence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>21,408</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>22,390</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>23,855</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>25,891</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- As per data provided by States/UTs.

Out of the Mega Cities, the four Metropolitan Cities — Delhi City (2,760), Chennai (2,699), Bengaluru (2,292) and Mumbai (1,436) have reported higher number of suicides. These four cities together have reported almost 35.5% of the total suicides reported from 53 mega cities. Delhi City has shown a decline during 2021 over 2020. Chennai has shown an increase of 11.1% (from 2,430 suicides to 2,699 suicides), Bengaluru 4.4% (from 2,196 suicides to 2,292 suicides) and Mumbai has observed an increase of 12.0% (from 1,282 suicides to 1,436 suicides). [Table–2.3]

The suicide rate in cities (16.1) was higher as compared to All-India suicide rate (12.0). Kollam followed by Asansol have reported the highest suicides rate of 43.9 and 38.5 respectively. [Table–2.2].

‘Family Problems (other than marriage related issues)’ was the major cause of suicide in cities which accounted for 34.7% (8,976) followed by ‘Illness’ (17.4%) (4,509) victims out of 25,891 victims.

However, a total of 1,032 victims have committed suicide in 53 mega cities due to ‘Marriage Related Issues’ accounting for 4.0% of total suicides in the cities.

Mass/Family Suicides

This section provides information on the number of cases where family members have committed suicide jointly. Mass/Family Suicides were reported in 12 States during the year 2021. State/UT & City-wise information on mass/family suicides is presented in Table–2.14.