

**Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioural therapy (CBT) by Peer Support Volunteers (PSVs) for
Suicide Prevention in Farmers of Punjab**

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Abstract

Every year over 800000 persons worldwide lost their lives by suicide (WHO, 2014). Recently, there has been 118 % increase in Farmers' suicide in Punjab from 2015-2016 (NCRB, 2018). With such alarming rate of farmer suicide in Punjab, Cognitive Behaviour therapy (CBT) was used by trained peer support volunteers(PSVs) to prevent suicidality, cognitive distortion and enhance resilience among farmers of Punjab. The study involved a total of 65 farmers from Fatehgarh Sahib, Patiala, Mansa and Sangrur. They were screened by 32 trained peer support volunteers by the Suicide Behaviours Questionnaire-Revised (SBQ-R) and those whose scores were above the threshold, were given Cognitive Distortions Scale (CDS) and Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC). They were given CBT extending over 2 months by those trained PSVs. Paired samples t-test results of pre and post intervention phases revealed that intervention had significantly alleviated suicidality ($t= 7.289$, $p=0.01$), self-criticism ($t= 13.205$, $p=0.01$), self-blame ($t= 5.664$, $p=0.01$), hopelessness ($t= 3.142$, $p=0.05$), helplessness ($t= 9.119$, $p= 0.01$) and preoccupation with danger ($t= 4.395$, $p=0.05$) and enhanced resilience ($t= -14.031$, $p= 0.05$). Cognitive behaviour therapy proved to be effective in inhibiting suicidal and cognitive distortion while enhancing resilience of the farmers studied. Several implications were drawn are discussed.

Key words: Cognitive behaviour therapy, suicide, peer support volunteers.

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