



Case Report

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Suicide Pact of a Love Couple: A Case Report



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Abstract

It is universally acknowledged fact that suicidal hanging of young boy/girl and loving couple are frequently reported in the national and India is no exception to it. In such case, the victims believe in the philosophy that their lives belong to them only. They realize that it is their right to choose life and death. The consequence of such cases may be from strong opposition from parents, lack of counselling from family, well wishers and relatives. They prefer to end their lives. The loving couple mentally decide to tie the knot to live together in heaven in optimism thinking that to be the real world for them. In one such case, a loving couple age between 15 to 16-year, wanted to marry. Being opposed from both the families belonging to different religion/caste, the loving couple got disappointed to leave the world for heavenly abode. Subsequently broke down, tied together, with a piece of cloth and hung themselves from the branch of a tree. The crime scene investigation in undisturbed condition, coupled with PM report could confirm the death of the loving couple was suicidal hanging. The details have been discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Loving couple; Suicide-pact; Hanging; Ligature mark; Autopsy report

Introduction

The suicide incident is very alarming in the country and statistics on suicide is very distressful. According to the report of World Health Organization (WHO), every 40 seconds a person commits suicide somewhere in the world [1]. Unfortunately, India has highest suicide rate among youth in the world [2]. Based on National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Govt of India, data, 2015, it is reported that every hour one student commits suicide in India [3]. Further, 35.5% youths (15-29 age groups) are contributed per 1 lac suicide victims [4]. Further, the guardians knowing about the fact, fail to extend moral support and also to create positive emotion to mitigate such menace. There are various factors contributed for raising such incident for followings:

- Strong opposition to establish relation with other Religion /caste.
- Love is blind.
- Lack of counselling from parents/relatives.
- Young boys want more girl friend to enjoy life.
- Oppose routine/discipline life.
- Poor attention of parents, public, principal, police, guardians.
- Financial freedom.
- Lack of awareness on dignity of life.
- Use of powerful information tools like social media like, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter.

Hanging and poisoning are reported to be the most common methods of suicide in India [5]. Hanging is preferred due to easy availability of hanging materials and also to locate the safe place either indoor or outdoor. The national statistics on crime cases shows the number of suicide on love affairs is rising trend. The suicide due to failure in love affair is 3.2 % of the total suicides in the country [6]. A case study on the suicide of a love couple due to strong opposition from both families has been discussed. Further, united hanging, tying together with a piece of long cloth (dupatta) shows psychological profile of the victims i.e. "They wanted to be together, did not want to be apart and not live without each other."

Case Report

A boy and girl inhabitants of a village developed very close relation. One day the girl staying with family was reported missing. Being worried, the parents searched for the daughter and could know that she was eloped with a boyfriend very close to her in the same village. Since, the boy and girl belonged to different religion /caste, the relation was opposed by both the families. Knowing the strong opposition, the loving couple, finding no other way, decided to end their lives for heavenly abode and committed pact suicide by hanging from the branch of a tree.

Material and Methods

Autopsy Report

A. Autopsy finding of the victim (boy):

The deceased is a 16-year old male of average built. There is no external injury, deformity and dislocation of joints. A ligature mark reddish brown in colour is present obliquely around the whole circumference of the neck. The width of ligature mark is 2cm and situated 5cm below the left mastoid and 5cm below chin, 7cm above suprasternal notch and 3 cm below tip of right mastoid. Knot is present on the posterior aspect of right side of neck. Fracture of hyoid bone is present. No extravasation of blood in the neck. Cricoid and thyroid cartilage are found intact. Subcutaneous tissue under the ligature mark is white and glistening. The cause of death is asphyxia as a result of hanging and the time since death is 6 to 18 hours.



Figure 1: Love couple hanging from the branch of a tree.



Figure 2 : love couple hanging both tied with a dupatta (dress material) marked (X) shows to remain together forever.



Figure 3 : Hanging victim showing ligature mark, protruded tongue & dribbling of saliva.



Figure 4 : Hanging victim showing ligature mark above larynx, protruded tongue & dribbling of saliva.



Figure 5 : Hanging material (nylon rope) cut into two pieces at suspension point to bring the victims down.

B. Autopsy finding of the victim (girl)

The deceased is a 15-year old female of average built. There is no external injury, deformity and dislocation of joints. A ligature mark reddish brown in colour is present obliquely around the

whole circumference of the neck. The width of ligature mark is 2cm and situated 4cm below the left mastoid and 4cm below chin, 6cm above suprasternal notch and 4 cm below tip of right mastoid. Knot is present on the posterior aspect of right side of neck. Fracture of hyoid bone is present. No extravasations of blood in the neck. Cricoids and thyroid cartilage are found intact. Subcutaneous tissue under the ligature mark is white and glistening. The cause of death is asphyxia as a result of hanging and the time since death is 6 to 18 hours.

Discussion

The suicidal hanging spot was examined by forensic team, medico-legal expert along with investigating officer in undisturbed condition. It was observed that the feet of both the hanging bodies were almost touching the ground. The hanging material (a long nylon rope) was tied with one of the branches of a tree with multiple loops to avoid slip and it's both ends were used for making two nooses for hanging. There was sign of ligature mark on the neck of the victims. They had also protruded tongues and dribbling of saliva. Faces were pale and neck elongated. Post analysis of hanging features strongly suggested to be a case of suicidal hanging [7,8] and further supported by autopsy study. The suicide pact is unique and such type of hanging is rarely reported. The tying of both the victims together with a piece of cloth before hanging shows the psychological profile of the victims i.e. bound in love forever, not

to live without each other. The toxicological analysis of viscera and body fluid ruled out the presence of poison and drug in this case.

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