

A Different Case of Suicide by Hanging: Case Study of the Event

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Abstract

A thorough analysis of circumstances and examination of the death scene is crucial before determining the manner of death in cases of hanging. While there are numerous reports of suicide and homicide by hanging in India, instances where the deceased is found with hands and/or feet bound and with feet touching a chair, the ground, or a bed, are considerably uncommon, as illustrated in this particular case (figure no.1). Hanging is indeed one of the methods used in suicides due to its accessibility and the perception that it may lead to a quick death. However, it's important to note that the choice of method can vary greatly depending on individual circumstances and cultural context. It is very easy to locate the place (indoor/outdoor) as well as commonly available hanging materials like rope, long napkin, belt, saree, dupatta, and long cloth (dhoti). Partial hanging suicide with hand-tied rope/dupatta cases are very less in number. Data on suicides, such as those reported by the National Crime Records Bureau, provide important insights into patterns and risk factors for suicide, essential information for public health interventions, and policy-making aimed at preventing such deaths. A total of 1,70,924 suicides were reported in the country during 2022⁹. Sometimes suicidal tendency of the victim is so high that he/she can tie his/her hands with ligature material so that he/she cannot escape from the suicidal situation. We can also learn about partial hanging and postmortem blisters from this case study.

Key words: Hanging, Suicide, Partial Hanging, Ligature, Tide Hands

Introduction

In India, more and more accounts depict hanging as an adult's preferred way of attempting suicide. A person who is fully or partially hanged is said to be hanging if they die from external pressure on their neck when a ligature is placed around their neck¹¹⁻¹².

Violent asphyxial deaths are the major contributing cause to deaths due to unnatural suicide, homicide, and accidents. There are violent asphyxial deaths like hanging, choking, strangulation, throttling, smothering, drowning, traumatic asphyxia, etc., the most common form of suicide is by hanging; in which there is a suspension of the body by a tying

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or ligating which mainly causes neck compression externally and the weight of the body being the constricting force¹⁰. Suicide is specifically referred to as hanging, and partial hanging is frequently used as a diagnostic tool for suicidal methods of death. It has been questioned, although, how frequently partial hangings are as documented in the literature¹. Sometimes murder is arranged as a hanging, or murder is staged as a suicide. There have also been cases of inadvertent cervical compressions that mimic murder²⁻⁴. Hanging has been a common method of capital punishment since the Middle Ages and is the primary execution method in numerous countries and regions. We report one different case of hanging where the ligature mark was well-preserved with whitish discharge around the neck circumferentially despite putrefactive changes in the body possibly the putrefaction is delayed in a ligature mark. This case study can help to differentiate Partial Hanging findings from Complete Hanging. This Case report is different in its way as the victim was found in a closed isolated place after 23 days of missing report.

Case Report

An 18 year old male person found dead in a room. According to victim's brother statement the victim had gone to party with his friends but did not told the place where they were going, the victim was missing since then about 23 days. Deceased was working in A tannery and was found in a closed colony near his house. When the forensic team reached at crime scene person was found hanged with thin rope and both hands were tied with green coloured dupattaa/ stole like rope. Right lower limb was touching the bed and other lower limb was straight downside.as we can clearly see in the figure no.1 Deceased with tide hands.



Figure 1: Deceased with tide hands

History was taken from deceased brother and panchanama, both were saying that the person was missing from 23 days. Informed consent was taken from deceased's brother for the use of victim's history in our case study.

AUTOPSY FINDINGS

External Examination:

Average built body, Eyes partially open, Mouth partially open. The body color was greenish-black, and post-mortem blisters were present at places over the body including the lower limb, upper limb, abdomen, scrotum and sole, bilateral forearm and lower limb discoloration was there. abdomen, penis, scrotum was distended. Both forearms and lower limbs were circumferentially greenish-black in color bilateral pedal edema was there, and the whitish greenish fungus was there around the neck at the ligature mark. The tips of the fingers of both hands were mummified. Lips were dry black, and both eyes were swollen and bulging out. Scalp hair loose. A non-continuous ligature mark with a gap of 5cm on the back of the neck was obliquely placed between the larynx and chin following the line of mandible reaching up to the left mastoid region. External signs of putrefaction are slippage of skin, and the formation of putrefactive fluid-filled blisters as shown in picture figure.3



Figure 2: Ligature mark Figure.3 Post Mortem Blisters

INTERNAL EXAMINATION:

Lungs- right 240gm left-215 gm. soft reddish black in appearance

Trachea soft, Heart -210 gm. Soft, Stomach empty,

Liver- 870gm gall bladder-soft, Spleen-70gm soft,

Kidney- left -75gm right-80gm soft

All samples were collected and sent for FSL (Forensic Science Lab) to rule out any possibility of poisoning status. The cause of death was asphyxia as a result of antemortem hanging.

All related figure of the case are shown in the adjacent .



Figure 4: Liquefied brain material



Figure 5: Hyoidbone intact no fracture

Discussion

Suicide by hanging is one of the most common techniques employed worldwide¹. Every suicide is a private tragedy that ends a person's life too soon and has a lasting impact on the lives of friends, family, and communities. In our nation, more than one million individuals take their own lives each year. Suicide can have several reasons, including issues with one's job or career, feelings of loneliness, abuse, violence, family issues, mental illness, alcoholism, loss of business profits, chronic pain, divorce proceedings, etc. Police-recorded suicide cases provide the NCRB with statistics on suicides. A total of 1,70,924 suicides were reported in the country during 2022⁹.

Human beings are inherently emotional creatures. While many can endure and surmount the pressures of life, some faced with overwhelming challenges, opt to end their lives through suicide. Others can manage, and even flourish, despite difficult conditions, yet numerous individuals end their lives in this manner. It is widely acknowledged that stress and depression are pivotal risk factors for suicide. Experiences such as the passing of a partner, job loss, academic setbacks, family discord, financial struggles, marital dissatisfaction, and exposure to

abuse and violence can act as catalysts for individuals contemplating suicide.⁶⁻⁸

Sometimes, since high ligature points (such hooks or pipes) have been removed, partial suspension or partial weight-bearing on the ligature is utilised, especially in jails, mental hospitals, or other facilities where complete suspension support is challenging to construct¹³. In very few instances of partial hanging, the deceased is found with their hands and feet restrained and in contact with furniture such as a bed or chair, often with their hands bound by a rope. In our case study Autopsy results confirm asphyxia as the cause of death due to antemortem hanging.

Ethical clearance: Taken from G.S.V.M Medical College Kanpur Nagar committee dated 22/02/2023 .Reference no.EC/65/Feb/2023

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Conclusion

The conclusion of this case is Suicidal Hanging as the cause of death is supported by assessments of an undisturbed crime scene and the position of the body. The distinctive binding of the wrists suggests the individual was restrained to prevent any struggle or self-defence. This case study we can learn if we report a missing as soon as a person is missing to the police, There is a possibility to save one's life. Sometimes suicidal tendency of the victim is so high that he/she can tie his/her both hands with ligature material so that he/she could not escape from suicidal situation as we can see in figure.1.We can also learn about partial hanging and postmortem blisters figure.3 from this case study

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