



Original Article

Sociological Study on Depression, Stress Among College Students

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Abstract

Depression is a common health issue among college students. Depression can be debilitating, and if left untreated, it can lead to significant psychological, emotional, and physical consequences. Depression has severe repercussions for college students, such as decreased academic achievement, the emergence of suicidal thoughts, social isolation, difficulties in relationships, and loss of motivation to accomplish goals. Depression and stress are among the most pressing psychological challenges faced by college students in contemporary society.

This study explores the prevalence, causes, and consequences of depression among undergraduate learners, with a particular focus on gender-based differences and coping mechanisms. Findings indicate that academic pressure, financial constraints, social isolation, and homesickness are significant contributors to mental distress. Male students were found to exhibit higher rates of depression, whereas female students reported greater levels of anxiety. The study underscores the urgent need for preventive interventions, such as student counseling centers, mentor-mentee programs, and mental health awareness workshops. The implications of the research highlight the importance of early detection, targeted counseling, and policy-level reforms in higher education institutions to foster student well-being and academic success.

Keywords: depression, dysthymic disorder, self-worth, self-concept, behaviour, stress, coping, mental health, college students, gender differences

Introduction

Depression encompasses a wide spectrum of emotions, ranging from simple sadness to a severe, life-threatening state of suicidal thoughts. This is a prevalent mental health issue that often arises in daily life. Normally, feelings of sadness or unhappiness subside and return to emotional stability within a reasonable timeframe. However, there are instances in which this prolonged state of sadness surpasses the triggering factor in terms of significance and duration. Individuals remain persistently sad and withdraw from personal, social, and occupational activities. In such cases, a diagnosis of depression should be considered.

Literature Review

This research revealed a high prevalence of depression in the surveyed colleges, with older students exhibiting higher levels of depression. Students from the commerce stream were significantly more prone to depression than those from the science stream were. Additionally, depression levels were slightly higher among males and students attending government colleges. The study also explored gender differences in the levels of depression and anxiety as well as variations in depression and anxiety levels across different colleges. The results indicated that females experienced higher levels of anxiety than males, while males had higher rates of depression. Furthermore

Objective of the study:

1. To study on depression among the college students.
2. To study difference between male and female college students on the criteria of depression.

The word 'coping' is frequently used to describe ways of dealing with stress or to modify factors that contribute to depression among college students; feelings of sadness, loss of interest in daily activities, and fatigue are commonly experienced by individuals. However, when these feelings persist for extended periods and significantly impact one's life, they may indicate depression, which affects people of all ages and genders, and its exact causes are not fully understood. Various factors have been identified as potential contributors, including genetic features, psychological and social factors, and environmental factors, changes in

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Neurotransmitter levels in the brain, medical conditions, drug use, and early childhood traumas. Depression among college students can stem from factors, such as homesickness, loneliness, financial stress, academic pressure, excessive social media use, drug and alcohol abuse, poor body image, and self-esteem. Although these factors are common among college students, they may contribute to depression in the general population. Many students enter college with excitement for new experiences, friendships, and increased freedom, often overlooking the magnitude of the changes they face and the need to develop coping strategies. Depressed college students often struggle to focus on schoolwork and find simple tasks that are difficult to complete. Loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, impacting academic and social engagement. Disconnection from one's own emotions is another common indicator of depression, which is characterized by an inability to express one's feelings.

This can result in despair, hopelessness, helplessness, and apathy. Guilt may arise when students experiencing challenging times perceive their behaviors as burdensome to others. This feeling of helplessness can hinder lasting changes and generate overwhelming guilt. Depression can also manifest as chronic headaches or body aches that do not respond to common remedies. Other symptoms include irregular sleep patterns, suicidal thoughts, and social isolation. Higher education is a stressful period in students' lives, which they need to cope with for various reasons such as living away from their families, a heavy syllabus, and inefficiency in higher education programs. Depression, anxiety, and academic stress among college students are causes of concern. Every nation invests a great deal of money in education. It focuses on stress among college students, the nature of psychiatric morbidity, emotional problems and adjustment, and the psychological problems of college students. Emphasizing how counseling will help students with emotional problems and suggesting preventive measures to be taken by colleges, such as setting up student counseling centers, and creating awareness among college students in seeking help with counseling centers. It is also suggested to have a compulsory mentor-mentee programme at all colleges. A student health committee should be formed at each college, with mental health professionals as its members. There should be regular seminars and workshops for teachers and college students on various psychological problems and coping mechanisms.

Conclusion

The present study found that depression in high- and low- stress perceivers and the inhibitory effect were more pronounced in high-stress perceivers, but expression inhibition did not moderate the relationship between perceived stress and depression.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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