

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Evaluation of depression in young adults

¹Angad Singh Kochar, ²Desiree Saimbi

^{1,2}Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Saraswathi Institute of Medical Sciences, Hapur, Uttar Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT:

Background: Depression and anxiety are the two most common mental health conditions in the general population as well as in clinical practice. The present study was conducted to assess cases of depression among young adults. **Materials & Methods:** 76 patients of depression of both genders were selected and the level of depression was recorded using The Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) during the two weeks before and including the day of survey completion. **Results:** Out of 76 patients, males were 30 and females were 46. Age group 20-30 years had 12 males and 18 females, 30-40 years had 10 males and 15 females and >40 years had 8 males and 13 females. 24 males and 36 females had nuclear family and 6 males and 10 females had joint family. Residence was rural in 12 males and 20 females and urban in 18 males and 26 females. The difference was significant ($P < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** The maximum number of patients suffering from depression was seen among young adults and most of them had mild level of depression.

Key words: Depression, Family, Patient Health Questionnaire

Corresponding author: Desiree Saimbi, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Saraswathi Institute of Medical Sciences, Hapur, Uttar Pradesh, India

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INTRODUCTION

Depression and anxiety are the two most common mental health conditions in the general population as well as in clinical practice.¹ Depression and anxiety also result in substantial disability, representing the 2nd and 5th leading causes of years lived with disability in the United States and accounting for enormous losses in work productivity as well as high direct and indirect health care costs. At this point in life, personality issues and substance abuse frequently exacerbate the clinical presentation of depression, which can be unusual. Many young individuals who initially report with recurrent depression will go on to develop bipolar illness, which has substantial consequences for the selection of future pharmacological treatments.²

One of the most important factors influencing health is gender, which affects how much power and control men and women have over factors affecting their health, such as their socioeconomic level, roles, and social standing, as well as their access to resources and medical care in a community. Gender has a significant role in determining an individual's susceptibility to certain mental health problems. Without analyzing the current gender-based differences in the prevalence of depression as baseline data, it is impossible to investigate the influence of gender on mental health.³ To support efforts to address

the factors that contribute to poor health, the conceptual framework for this review is designed to identify disparity, if any exists. Gender-based socioeconomic expectations play a major role in many of the unpleasant experiences and exposures to mental health risk factors that cause and sustain psychological disorders.⁴ In order to mitigate the impact of gender on the increasing prevalence of depression among patients, it is imperative to provide gender-sensitive healthcare and customize services to cater to individual gender needs.⁵ The present study was conducted to assess cases of depression among young adults.

MATERIALS & METHODS

The present study consisted of 76 patients of depression of both genders. All patients were informed about the study and their written consent was obtained.

Data such as name, age, gender etc. was recorded. The level of depression was recorded using The Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9). The PHQ-9 used was nine items having 4-points scale from 0 to 3 (0 – never, 1 – several days, 2 - more than half the time, and 3 - nearly every day) during the two weeks before and including the day of survey completion. Results thus obtained were subjected to statistical analysis. A p value less than 0.05 was considered significant.

RESULTS

Table I Distribution of patients

Total- 76		
Gender	Males	Females
Number	30	46

Table I shows that out of 76 patients, males were 30 and females were 46.

Table II Assessment of parameters

Parameters	Variables	Males	Females	P value
Age group (Years)	20-30	12	18	0.04
	30-40	10	15	
	>40	8	13	
Family type	Nuclear	24	36	0.02
	Joint	6	10	
Residence	Rural	12	20	0.82
	Urban	18	26	

Table II, graph I shows that age group 20-30 years had 12 males and 18 females, 30-40 years had 10 males and 15 females and >40 years had 8 males and 13 females. 24 males and 36 females had nuclear family and 6 males and 10 females had joint family. Residence was rural in 12 males and 20 females and urban in 18 males and 26 females. The difference was significant (P< 0.05).

Graph I Assessment of parameters

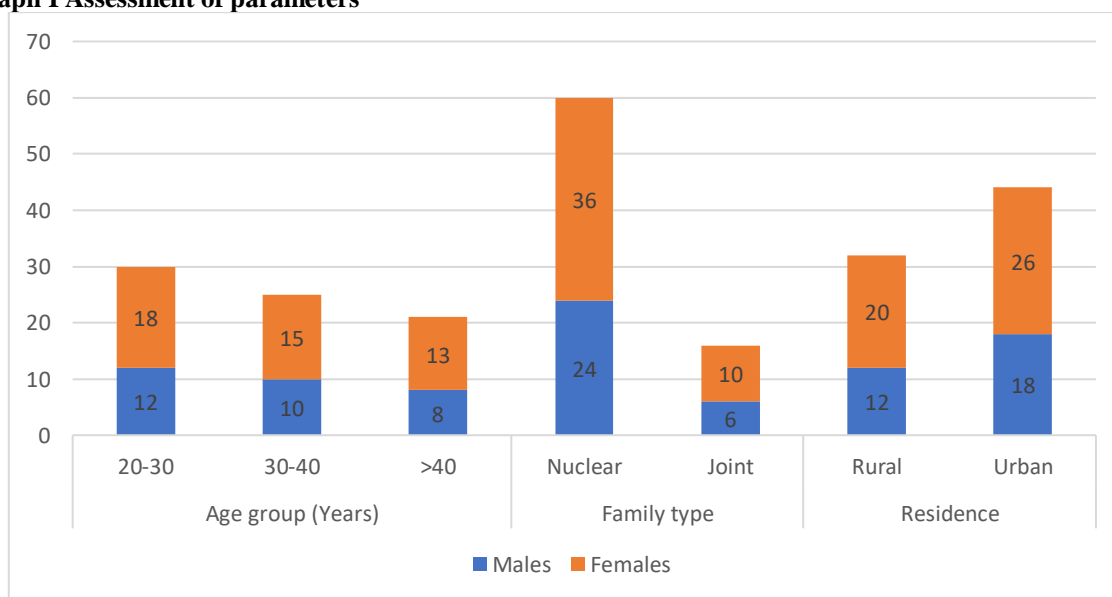


Table III Assessment of level of depression

Variables	Percentage	P value
Not at all	15%	0.01
Minimal	28%	
Mild	42%	
Moderate	12%	
Severe	3%	

Table III shows that the level of depression was not at all in 15%, minimal in 28%, mild in 42%, moderate in 12% and severe in 3% subjects. The difference was significant (P< 0.05).

DISCUSSION

Depression is a common psychiatric condition that negatively affects feeling, thinking and acting. Depression causes feelings of sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities once enjoyed.^{6,7} A person's capacity to operate both at home and at work can be negatively impacted by depression, which can also cause several emotional and physical issues. The young individuals between the ages of 10 and 24 exhibit remarkable growth and development.⁹ It is a vulnerable period that is frequently impacted by several risk and protective variables that have an impact on their well-being. Teens who exhibit sub-diagnostic levels of depression symptoms are more

likely to have depression in their early adult years, abuse drugs, and have poorer psychological and social outcomes.⁹ Depression is likely to persist throughout early adulthood when symptom severity approaches the diagnostic cutoff. It is a persistent finding in psychiatric epidemiology that women are twice as likely as men to have depression; this is not just because women are more likely to report, recollect, or seek treatment for depressive symptoms.^{10,11} The present study was conducted to assess cases of depression among young adults.

We found that out of 76 patients, males were 30 and females were 46. Kaur et al¹² revealed that 17.7% of respondents had depressive symptoms. Multivariate

analysis further showed that feeling lonely (adjusted odds ratio [aOR] = 2.99; 95% CI = 2.57-3.47), Indian ethnicity (aOR = 2.00; 95% CI = 1.63-2.44), using drugs (aOR = 1.85; 95% CI = 1.21-2.82), and being bullied (aOR = 1.79; 95% CI = 1.60-1.99) were significantly associated with depressive symptoms. Lack of parental supervision, alcohol use, and tobacco use were also significant risk factors. Addressing depressive symptoms among adolescents may have implications for managing their risks of being bullied and substance use. This study also highlights the need to further investigate depressive symptoms among adolescents of Indian ethnicity.

We found that age group 20-30 years had 12 males and 18 females, 30-40 years had 10 males and 15 females and >40 years had 8 males and 13 females. 24 males and 36 females had nuclear family and 6 males and 10 females had joint family. Residence was rural in 12 males and 20 females and urban in 18 males and 26 females. Chauhan et al¹³ found the prevalence of depression to be 38% among the study subjects in the age groups of 16 and 18 years. Males (35%) were found less depressed as compared to the females (41.8%). The association of frequency of going out for outing, extracurricular activities and type of activities and depression was statistically significant. Highest prevalence of depression was seen in obese (48.7%) study subjects. A statistically significant association was found between BMI and depression ($P < 0.003$). Majority of study subjects (36.6%) had consulted their parents, while 33% of study subjects had consulted their friends. Majority of study subjects (64.4%) listen to music to relieve statistically significant depression ($P < 0.001$). The study highlights the common but ignored problem of depression in adolescence.

Nair et al¹⁴ aimed at finding out the prevalence of depressive symptoms among young adults. Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) was administered in 1500 college students aged between 18-30 years of age. Majority of the respondents were females, day scholars, Hindus and came from nuclear families. 34.4% felt minimal depression, 38.0% felt mild depression, 13.2% had moderate depression, 4.5% had moderate to severe depression and 1.7% had severe depression. The common mental disorder of depression is common among young adults. Awareness creation for parents and teachers can help them to identify, support and refer adults with depression to appropriate professionals. Teachers delivered, peer-delivered and professional delivered School based mental health programme and crisis management help line are few ways to deal with depression among the young adults.

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The limitation of the study is the small sample size.

CONCLUSION

Authors found that the maximum number of patients suffering from depression was seen among young adults and most of them had mild level of depression.

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