A Review Study on Mental Health and Depression of Secondary School Students in North 24 Parganas District, West Bengal

Kanta Dhali [1], Dr. Rashmi Thakre [2]

[1, 2] Department of Education, Mansarovar Global University, Sehore, M.P., India.

ABSTRACT

Depression and the mental health of secondary school pupils are significant problems for adolescent development and education. This review study critically explores secondary school mental health and depression literature in North 24 Parganas District, West Bengal. Teenagers face emotional, social, and academic obstacles that can harm their mental health. Depression during this time can cause academic failure, behavioural disorders, and long-term mental health issues if not addressed. National and international research papers, journal articles, reports, and pertinent materials on adolescent mental health were analysed for the review. Academic stress, home environment, socio-economic conditions, peer pressure, and school climate affect secondary school students' mental health and depression, according to the reviewed literature. The results also show that depressed symptoms vary by area and social context. Region-specific and school-based studies in North 24 Parganas are lacking, according to the review study. It stresses early detection, mental health awareness, and school-based counselling and support. The study summarizes current research trends and provides a framework for future empirical investigations on secondary school students' mental health in North 24 Parganas District, West Bengal.

Keywords: Emotional, Depression, Socioeconomic, Environment, Physical.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a key concern in education, especially for secondary school students. Adolescence is a crucial time of fast physical, emotional, cognitive, and social change. Students must manage scholastic demands, peer pressure, family duties, and social challenges, which can affect their mental health. The most frequent mental health concerns among secondary school children are depression, anxiety, and emotional stress, which can influence their academic performance, social adjustment, and well-being. A review of secondary school students' mental health and depression is needed to comprehend the current information, theoretical views, and research trends in adolescent mental health. Numerous national and international studies have linked academic stress, socio-economic factors, family environment, and school climate to an increase in depressive symptoms in school-aged adolescents. Due to cultural, socioeconomic, and educational disparities, this research yields different results in different countries, highlighting the need for region-specific understanding.

Adolescent mental health difficulties in India are underreported due to societal stigma, lack of understanding, and restricted access to services. Exam pressure, job uncertainties, and parental expectations may make secondary school pupils more susceptible to depression and emotional suffering. West Bengal, especially North 24 Parganas District, has urban, semi-urban, and rural inhabitants. To understand secondary school students' mental health and depression in this region, a focused literature review is needed. The current review study critically reviews and synthesizes secondary school mental health and depression research in North 24 Parganas District, West Bengal. The review analyses studies, publications, and scholarly literature to identify relevant findings, research gaps, methodological trends, and adolescent mental health issues. A review like this will lay the groundwork for future empirical studies and help educators, researchers, and policymakers establish evidence-based mental health strategies for secondary school kids.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Obeng-Okon NAS, Opoku DA, Ayisi-Boateng NK, et al (2024):   One of the most commonly reported mental health issues on a global scale is depression among adolescents. Previous studies have focused on adult populations, but there is a dearth of data on its prevalence and associated factors in Ghanaian high school seniors. Policymaking that is vital to improve seniors' mental health and their access to mental health services may be obstructed by this. High school seniors in Ghana were the target population for this study, which aimed to determine the frequency of depression and its contributing factors. December 2022–February 2023 saw 289 Manya Krobo Senior High School pupils take part in an analytical cross-sectional study. Utilizing a two-stage random sampling procedure, the pupils were chosen. Information about people's demographics and personal traits was gathered through the use of a questionnaire. Depression was the main outcome, and the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 was used for this purpose. Results were shown as %s, frequencies, and averages for the summary statistics. We utilized multivariate logistic regression to find the variables linked to depression, and we offered odds ratios with 95% CIs. It was determined that a p-value of less than 0.05 was statistically significant. There was a range of 14–20 years in the students' ages, with a mean of 16.6 ($\pm$1.2). Practical issues were mentioned by more than a quarter of the pupils (26.3%). Of the pupils surveyed, 68.9% reported suffering from depression. Researchers found that being female (adjusted odds ratio:1.74, 95% confidence interval:1.01-2.97), being older (adjusted odds ratio:1.41, 95% confidence interval:1.10-1.81), having a history of a chronic health condition (adjusted odds ratio:3.74, 95% confidence interval:1.36-10.25), and having financial difficulties (adjusted odds ratio:2.31, 95% confidence interval: 1.15-4.63) were all factors associated with depression in this study. Teens in Ghana's Manya Krobo District suffer from an epidemic of despair, according to recent research. These results highlight the need for practical solutions to help students cope with depression, such as enhancing counselling services and mental health professionals.

Hazra, Bratati. (2024): Depression, anxiety, and stress are the primary topics of this study, which also looks at the mental health state of pupils in Hooghly district and how demographic variables like gender, family structure, and grade affect these findings. This investigation is a survey that takes a cross-sectional approach. Two hundred students in grades eleven and twelve were surveyed using the DASS-21 measure. Most students show appropriate levels of mental health, according to research.

However, a significant minority show mild to moderate symptoms, especially connected to anxiety and depression. It appears that gender, family structure, grade, and age do not independently impact mental well-being in this group, as statistical analysis did not show any significant differences in mental health based on these demographic variables. The study underscores the imperative for accessible mental health facilities in educational institutions, encompassing counseling and peer support, to address mild symptoms and prevent escalation. Tailored mental health therapies are essential for aiding adolescents in stress management and resilience development, hence promoting academic success and personal growth.

Ramesh, S.H. et al. (2024): The prevalence of depression is high among the mental disorder cases in India. In order to devise interventions to tackle the issue at the primary care level, it is crucial to assess the load. Our team conducted a meta-analysis and systematic review of research that showed how common depression is in primary care settings in India. A wide literature search strategy was developed using keywords and Medical Subject Headings. Significant heterogeneity was reported among the studies attributed majorly to a variety of study tools for assessing depression. Sub-group analysis revealed the higher aggregated prevalence of depression among females as compared to males at the primary care level. The study provided updated evidence of higher and gender differential burden of depression at the primary care level in India.

Jason Lee. (2024): In this study, Korean high school students who attend public schools and private schools are compared with regard to their social ties, levels of depression, and the type of education they receive. Students' levels of depression were not significantly related to the amount of time they spent in private schools, even though previous research has linked high levels of academic pressure to depression. However, among female students and those enrolled in public universities in particular, a statistically significant inverse relationship between students' social interactions and sadness was found. This was more common among students who attended public institutions. These findings highlight the significance of social support in lowering the % of individuals who suffer from depression. They also suggest that educational systems ought to place a higher priority on the establishment of social bonds as a means of improving the mental health of students.

Thomas Steare (2023): Adolescents' mental health may suffer as a result of academic pressure, although there is no global data synthesis to support this claim. We conducted the most comprehensive study to ever look at the link between academic pressure and mental health issues in adolescents, including sadness, anxiety, self-harm, suicidality, attempts at suicide, and actual suicide. In order to find studies that involved school-aged children or adolescents and evaluated the effects of academic pressure or the timing of the academic year on mental health issues like depression, anxiety, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, attempts, or suicide, we searched MEDLINE, PsycINFO, ERIC, and the Web of Science (core collection) until November 24, 2022. We assessed the possibility of bias using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool. To summarize the evidence, we used narrative synthesis. Cinquanta studies were included. Twenty research looked at both anxiety and depression symptoms, while nineteen studies focused solely on depression symptoms. At least one mental health outcome was positively correlated with academic pressure or scheduling within the academic year in forty-eight studies. Most studies were cross-sectional (n = 39), only included a

small number of potential confounders, or had other shortcomings that made causal conclusions less strong. We found that academic pressure could be a good place to start when trying to avoid teenage mental health problems through public health interventions. Academic pressure may be a risk factor that calls for intervention in educational and governmental contexts, but this can only be determined by large-scale cohort studies of the general population.

Ameerah Shaikh (2023): We looked at the numerous approaches to teaching that high school students take and how the Association of Mental Health stacks up. Of the 174 students who participated in this cross-sectional survey, 107 were female and 67 were male. The research took place in Karachi, Pakistan. They were in the eleventh and twelfth grades, or something similar to A levels, and their ages ranged from sixteen to nineteen. A validated instrument for assessing depression, the patient Health Questionnaire, and a specifically built structured questionnaire derived from a literature study were both utilized in the data gathering process. Twenty-nine-point three % of pupils, according to the findings of our study, suffered from mild depression. Immediately after this, 27.5% of students were diagnosed with severe depression, 23.0% were diagnosed with moderate depression, and 20.1% were found to be devoid of any form of depression. Another finding was that a greater proportion of females than males experienced symptoms of depression. The link between the various educational systems and the mental health of teenagers was not shown to have a significant correlation, however.

Patel, Umed et al. (2023): The devastating effects of depression have led them to rank it as the third leading cause of death among school-aged adolescents. Research on the causes of student depression is essential for effective treatment. The purpose of this research was to identify potential risk factors for depression among science students enrolled in an Indian private school in Rajkot. With the use of multistage sampling procedures, we performed a cross-sectional study on 1219 students from a private scientific stream school in Rajkot city. Using a tweaked version of the Patient Health Questionnaire-9, we assessed students for signs of depression. With the use of a pilot-tested semi-structured questionnaire, we investigated potential risk factors for depression. We performed a binary logistic regression analysis to identify depression predictors. 31.9% of pupils were identified as depressed. Physical illness, academic performance, substance abuse, feeling like a tough student, transportation, food, money, and housing challenges at a dorm or home, parental pressure to study, physical activity, sleep disturbance, and negative relationships with instructors and classmates were significantly correlated with depression. Researchers have identified parental education, physical disease, substance addiction, and academic achievement as the only other factors predictive of depression. The current study identified depression predictors among the students and demonstrated a noteworthy % of students experiencing depressive symptoms. To reduce the kids' risk of depression, they necessitated coordinated actions.

Bharti Kumari and Parmod Kumar (2022): found that researchers found that secondary school students face crucial challenges related to their health, relationships, families, education, and personal lives. Mental health plays a crucial role in successfully handling these kinds of issues. Consequently, the paper takes on importance as a sincere attempt to investigate the problems and obstacles related to secondary school students' mental health. Several research studies that touch on

mental health in some way or another are synthesised in this review study. Misconceptions regarding mental health, a dearth of information and services, and challenges relating to society, individuals, money, the environment, and technology are all factors in India's dismal mental health state, according to the report. The research also showed that there is a treatment gap and insufficient facilities and resources for therapy. When it comes to mental health, prevention and therapy are paramount. The ability to cope with stress and grow into contributing members of society depends on secondary school students' orientation to and understanding of mental health issues and barriers. The findings of this study will greatly assist administrators, guidance counsellors, parents, and teachers in their efforts to foster a nurturing environment for secondary school students' mental health.

Raniti, M. et al. (2022): investigated that school connection measures how well children interact with their teachers, peers, and the classroom. It has drawn interest as a potentially modifiable protective factor for common mental health issues from both the health and education sectors. It is unknown, nevertheless, how much school connectedness can do to stop young people from developing anxiety or despair or help them go away. Evidence for a connection between school connectivity and mental health problems including anxiety and depression was considered in this meta-analysis, along with the effects of programs designed to boost school connectivity on these conditions. Researchers first assessed depression and anxiety outcomes at an average age of 14 years old. Most studies found that higher levels of school connectedness protected against depressive and/or anxiety symptoms, with depression being measured more frequently than anxiety. A few research projects discovered no meaningful correlation. Both intervention trials aimed at boosting school connectivity and alleviating depression through improvements in self-esteem and school relationships. These results imply that a fresh focus for the prevention of anxiety and depression might be school connectedness. We were unable to ascertain whether increasing school connectedness encourages young people who are already depressed and anxious to go into remission. Further research is necessary to explore anxiety, the outcomes of diagnosis, research conducted outside of North America, and intervention trials.

Gunn Pungpapong and Rasmon Kalayasiri (2022): Made the statement that in order to evaluate the frequency and risk factors for depression, anxiety, and stress among teenagers under lockdown during the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in both Asian and Western nations. Secondary school students participated in an online cross-sectional survey from May to June 2020 using various social media platforms, such as Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and LINE. We assessed the frequency and intensity of depressive symptoms (Patient Health Questionnaire-9), anxious thoughts (Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale-7), and stress (Perceived Stress Scale-10) over the previous 30 days using univariate and multivariate logistic regression models. We further searched for statistically significant associations with associated variables such as demographics and social distance. Six out of the ten teenagers in our study who were undergoing lockdowns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic experienced depression, four experienced anxiety, and one experienced stress. We discovered that these mental health issues were substantially correlated with female gender, older school years, and changes in substance use behaviours.

Nakie, G., Segon, T., Melkam, M. *et al.* **(2022)**: Numerous studies have demonstrated that students' academic performance is influenced by symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress, which can hinder their educational attainment and result in school dropout. To date, no research has assessed these three illnesses in high school pupils in Africa. This study aims to evaluate the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress, along with their associated factors, among high school students in Northwest Ethiopia. A cross-sectional study was undertaken at an institution. A simple random sample method was employed to pick 849 individuals from six high schools in Northwest Ethiopia. For the purpose of gathering data, a self-administered DASS-21 questionnaire was used. In order to determine which variables were associated with DAS, researchers used SPSS Version 25.0 to run bi- and multi-variable analyses on the collected data.

Karki A, Thapa B, Pradhan PMS, Basel P (2022): Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the mental health issues of depression and anxiety. It is critical to study the frequency and associated risk factors of these common mental disorders in order to lessen their impact. High school students in a metropolitan area of Kathmandu, Nepal, were the subjects of this study, which sought to measure the prevalence of mental health issues and to identify risk factors for them. Four hundred and fifty-three high school students from five different schools in Kathmandu's Tokha Municipality participated in the cross-sectional study. Assessing the intensity of symptoms associated with depression, anxiety, and stress was done using the DASS-21, which is a validated Nepali version of the same instrument. To find variables linked with DAS symptoms that were statistically significant (p-value < 0.05), multivariate logistic regression was used. With a 95% confidence interval (CI) between 51.8% and 61.1%, 55.6% between 50.9% and 60.2%, and 32.9% between 28.6% and 37.4%, the total prevalence of DAS was found to be 56.5%. Factors including nuclear family type, undergraduate major, perceived academic stress, and cyberbullying encounters were significantly associated with depression in the multivariable model. Anxiety was significantly associated with being a female, having a mother without a bachelor's degree, attending a university in the arts or sciences, and having experienced or perceived academic stress. Similarly, there was a strong correlation between stress and being female, having parents who are not present, and having a history of perceived academic stress. The results of this study support the need for school-based counselling services and other preventative steps to help students deal with academic stress and cyberbullying.

Yong Kang Cheah et al. (2021): They showed that mental health difficulties are strongly associated with risky behaviours. The current study aims to investigate the relationship between risk behaviours and mental health in school-aged children, particularly those from ethnic minorities. Data from the 2017 National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) (n = 8,230) were used for the analysis. The poll included the whole country of Malaysia. We employed three risky behaviours—drug use, alcohol consumption, and cigarette smoking—to measure the dependent variables. We used probit regressions to look at the relationship between mental health and the chances of smoking, drinking, and drug use. Personal characteristics and way of life were included as control variables. Anxiety, depression, and thoughts of suicide were all influenced by truancy, which in turn reduced the link between these factors and cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, and illegal drug use. Via the medium of truancy, anxiety, sadness, and suicidal thoughts influenced alcohol use, cigarette

smoking, and illicit substance use. Students with anxiety, sadness, and suicidal thoughts were more likely to smoke, drink, and use illegal drugs than their counterparts without any mental health conditions, even after adjusting for demographic and lifestyle variables. Moreover, students who skipped class had a greater propensity to use illegal drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes in comparison to students who did not skip class. In Malaysia, students from ethnic minorities are more likely to engage in risky behaviors when their mental health is in good shape. School administrators and public health administrators need to be aware that kids with mental health conditions are more likely to engage in risky behaviors.

Salelkar SS, Borker (2020): Adolescence is a period of time that is characterized by taking risks, exercising autonomy, engaging in adventurous activities, and making efforts to transition into adulthood. Individuals are susceptible to vulnerability due to a variety of factors, including physical and emotional changes, peers, social media, education, and the expectations of their families. It is the purpose of this research to investigate the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress among adolescents attending school in Bagdogra who are in the ninth through twelfth grades, to investigate the link between family variables and socioeconomic status, and to identify the co-morbidities that are associated with depression, anxiety, and stress. Methods: A total of 231 students participated in a cross-sectional study that was conducted using the DASS-21 scale. Furthermore, a self-structured questionnaire concerning the composition of families and socioeconomic standing was presented to the participants, and SPSS software was utilized for the purpose of analysis. In total, 76.2% of the population was affected by at least one of the mental disorders that were investigated. Stress was significantly more prevalent in the 12th and 10th grades (55.2% and 55.4%, respectively), while depression was significantly more prevalent in the 12th grade (28.4%), the 9th grade (28.4%), and the 10th grade (27.6%). There was not a significant difference, regardless of age, gender, family composition, or socioeconomic situation, among the participants. The majority of cases of mental illness were shown to occur in conjunction with one another, rather than being isolated from one another. There were eight instances of depression that occurred in conjunction with stress, followed by four instances of anxiety. On the other hand, anxiety was six times more likely to occur in conjunction with stress. To summarize, nearly three out of every four children exhibited symptoms that were associated with at least one of the mental morbidities that were mentioned. There was a statistically significant increase in the prevalence of depression and stress among students who answered board examinations (classes 10 and 12) compared to children who did not answer board exams. Anxiety, depression, and stress were all strongly correlated with one another.

3. CONCLUSION

Adolescent mental health is an important issue in today's classrooms, according to a literature assessment on depression and mental health among secondary school students. Depression is one of the mental health issues that studies show secondary school kids are more likely to experience as a result of academic pressure, family issues, socioeconomic status, peer pressure, and shifting social situations. According to the research we looked at, adolescent mental health problems have far-reaching consequences for kids' academic success, social lives, and general growth, in addition to affecting their emotional stability.

While numerous studies on a global and national scale have looked at the mental health of teenagers, the analysis also reveals a dearth of district-level studies that concentrate on areas like West Bengal's North 24 Parganas. Rural and semi-urban settings are understudied compared to urban people in the existing literature. Further research addressing the long-term impacts of depression and the efficacy of prevention measures is lacking, according to the review, including studies that followed participants over time or conducted interventions in schools.

The review study concludes that secondary school pupils in the North 24 Parganas District need immediate, thorough, and locally-focused research on mental health and depression. Supportive school environments, counselling services, and mental health awareness should all be part of the educational system, it says. Teachers, researchers, and lawmakers can use this literature review as a springboard to create effective programs to boost students' emotional and psychological health in secondary school, and it will also play a solid theoretical groundwork for future empirical investigations in the field.

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