

DEPRESSION IN ADOLESCENTS: NEED FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS IN MANAGING DEPRESSION

Renu Bala, Sheela Sangwan & Krishna Duhan

*Research Scholar, Department of Human Development and Family Studies,
CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, India*

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ABSTRACT

Depression is a major factor in adolescent suicide, substance abuse, and a common cause of school failure and school dropout. Children and adolescents with major depressive disorders are at risk for suicidal behaviour, substance abuse, physical illness, early pregnancy, poor academic performance, impaired psychosocial functioning, and exposure to negative life events (Kovacs, 1996). The present study was conducted purposefully in two institutions, each from Haryana State and Delhi. Adolescents equally representing both the sexes i.e. 50 girls and 50 boys were selected on a random basis from both the institutions. Hence, a total of 200 adolescents constituted the sample for the study to assess the existing social and emotional skills. The adolescents were further assigned to experimental (50) and control (50) group. Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed by Nair et al. (2010) was used to assess the social and emotional skills among the adolescents. Beck et al. (1996) was used to estimate depression among adolescents. Majority of adolescents had moderate level of depression and negatively correlated with most of the social and emotional skill dimensions.

KEYWORDS: *Depression, Social and Emotional Skills, Institutionalized Adolescents*

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence, a vital stage of growth and development, marks the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is characterized by rapid physiological changes and psychological maturation. The adolescents have the intellectual maturity to assess a situation, assess the various aspects of the situation, challenge the prescription of others, develop a repertoire of skills, make a choice of own and later come to a conclusion about the skill and its execution. The adolescent also has the need to exercise skills to indicate and establish individuality and independence. Adolescents across the world face many changes and challenges during this phase of life. It is important to equip the adolescents with the necessary skills to adopt the developmental changes and deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Sayad (1993) reported that the experiences of adolescents living in shelters could strongly affect their adulthood personality and their future life. And also found that adolescents living in shelters are vulnerable to loneliness, depression, low self-esteem and drug abuse, indicating that there are problems in both the functioning of sheltered adolescents and the services delivered or provided to them. Connor (2003) reported that institutionalized adolescents were found to be more sensitive, depressed and did not care about being approved of by other people in their society. Social and emotional skills are not only limited to adolescents with problems, but for everyone, to shape them into good citizens. Adolescents who are able to display sound social and emotional skills are more likely to be accepted by their peers, be academically successful,

and have more self-confidence. These skills will help adolescents in coping difficulties they face in their personal, emotional and social development. Through these skills adolescents learn to communicate with their teachers, adults and peers.

Materials and Methods

The research was conducted purposively in Haryana state and Delhi.. Two types of variable were considered in the study- the independent and dependent variable. Depression was taken as independent variables. Depression- is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interests. Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-II) developed by Beck *et al.* (1996) was used to estimate depression among adolescents. Dependent variables are those which are influenced by some external or internal factors. Social and emotional skills were taken as the dependent variable. Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed by Nair *et al.* (2010) was used to assess the social and emotional skills among the adolescents.

RESULTS

Levels of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Adolescents

The main variables considered under the independent variables of the adolescents were depression.

Depression

Results presented in Table 1 shows the depression level of adolescents of both the institutions. It was found that 63.00 per cent of adolescents in Delhi had moderate level and 21.00 per cent had high level of depression, similarly, in Haryana 53.00 per cent adolescents had moderate level and 31.00 per cent high level of depression.

Table1: Levels of Depression

Institutions Variable (Depression)	Delhi (n=100)	Haryana (n=100)	Total (n=200)
Low	16(16.00)	16(16.00)	32(16.00)
Moderate	63(63.00)	53(53.00)	116(58.00)
High	21(21.00)	31(31.00)	52(26.00)

Figures in parentheses denote percentages

Relationship between Social and Emotional Skills and Depression among Adolescents

The correlation coefficients between psychological variables i.e. depression and social and emotional skills are presented in Table 2. Results indicated that depression among adolescents had negative and significant correlation with most of the social and emotional skills dimensions i.e. self awareness ($r = -.44^*$), effective communication ($r = -.24^*$), interpersonal relationship ($r = -.15^*$), coping with emotions ($r = -.43^*$) and coping with stress ($r = -.45^*$). The results showed that adolescents with lower levels of social and emotional skills have high levels of depression.

Table 2: Relationship between Social and Emotional Skills and Depression among Adolescents n=200

Sr. No.	Dimensions of Social and Emotional Skills	Correlation Coefficients
1.	Self-awareness	-.44*
2.	Empathy	-.03
3.	Effective communication	-.24*
4.	Interpersonal-relationships	-.15*
5.	Coping with emotions	-.43*
6.	Coping with stress	-.45*

*Significant at 5% level

DISCUSSIONS

Adolescents had a moderate level of depression. Flank *et.al* (1996) revealed that children in institutional care are extremely vulnerable to psychological problems and institutionalization in the long term, in early childhood increases the likelihood that they will grow into psychologically impaired and economically unproductive adult. Halfron *et.al* (2002) also concluded that children in foster care have a disproportionately high prevalence of mental health disorders. Results indicated that most of the dimensions of social and emotional skills were found to be negatively and significantly correlated with depression, anxiety and stress. Var *et al.* (2011) found that there was significant negative correlation between self esteem and problem areas. Muris *et al.* (2004) reported that low levels of emotional warmth and high levels of rejection, control, and inconsistency are accompanied by high levels of anger and hostility. Erozkhan (2013) found that the communication skills and interpersonal problem solving skills were significantly correlated to social self-efficacy and communication skills and interpersonal problem solving skills. Navidi (2006) concluded the effectiveness of anger management training on self- regulation skills, compatibility and public health of high school boys and showed that due to the implementation of anger management training program, participants' skills in the area of developed anger managing and simultaneously the levels of maladaptive behaviors and symptoms of the disorder in the public health of participants decreased. Short (2006) found that social skills training lead to enhancement of social networking, social desirable behaviour, and regulated behaviours.

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