

## Role of anxiety and depression in adolescent's emotional adjustment

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between anxiety, depression and adolescent's emotional adjustment among secondary students. The sample consists of total 100 students (out of hundred 50 male and 50 female) within age range of 16 to 18 years. Generalized Anxiety Disorder scale (GAD-7), Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), and Adolescent's Emotional Adjustment Inventory (AEAI), were directly administered to all the respondents. The data were analysed by using descriptive statistics i.e. Mean, SD, Pearson product moment correlation and stepwise multiple regression analysis. The results revealed significant positive correlation between anxiety and depression ( $r = .65, p < .01$ ), and adolescent's emotional adjustment ( $r = .58, p < .01$ ) among students. Regression analysis finds the generalized anxiety ( $R^2 = .34, p < .001$ ) potent predictive factor which accounts 34% of variance in emotional adjustment among secondary students.

**Keywords:** *Anxiety, Depression & Adolescent's Emotional Adjustment*

Anxiety is one of the significant psychological disorders among the school going adolescents and children throughout the worldwide (Costello, Mustillo, Erkanli, Keeler & Angold, 2003). The prevalence rates range varies in different country according to their psychological environment because large number of adolescents and children goes undiagnosed owing to the internalized nature of its symptoms (Tomb & Hunter, 2004). In Indian study, Deb, Chatterjee and Walsh (2010) investigated the anxiety among adolescents in Kolkata city. The study also compared the anxiety across gender, school type, and socio-economic status. Finding reveals anxiety was prevalent more in the boys than the girls which means boys were more anxious than girls. Adolescents belonging to the middle socio-economic status suffered more anxiety than those from high and low socio-economic status groups. Also, Bengali medium schools adolescents were more anxious than English medium schools. Specifically, in India, the major cause of anxiety which has been documented among the school going children and adolescents is high parental educational expectation and pressure related to academic achievement (Deb, 2001). All anxiety disorder has some common symptoms like, fear and uneasiness, problem related to sleep, sweaty, numbs or tingling hands or feet, Shortness of breath etc. Many studies which have been focused on

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## **Role of anxiety and depression in adolescent's emotional adjustment**

gender difference on anxiety (Poulton, Milne, Craske & Menzies, 2001). In a significant study, Singh, Junnarkar and Sharma (2015) were found adolescents residing in rural areas differed from their urban counterparts on prosocial behaviour and anxiety. Government school going adolescents differed from private school going adolescents on prosocial behaviour, stress and anxiety. The school going adolescents differed from non-school going adolescents on stress, depression and anxiety.

Depression is a kind of mental state with low mood and aversion to activity. It can affect the person's thought, feeling, emotion and behaviour. There are many feature of depression such as sadness, difficulties in thinking and significant changes in appetite and sleep. People experiencing depression may have feeling of hopeless and sometime suicidal thought. Depression can affect people of all age, races and socio economic classes therefore it is known as common mental disorder. Depression, anxiety and adjustment have been widely explored to assess the relationship and its effect on human behaviour among various age groups, population, clinical sample and nonclinical samples. According to The World Health Organization report (WHO, 2017), 10 to 20% of adolescents and children throughout the worldwide experience mental health problems. Research revealed that 50% of all mental disorders are emerged by the age of 14 and 75 % respectively up to the age of 18 (Kessler et al., 2007; Kim-Cohen et al., 2003).

Adolescent is the most significant and critical period of the human life. It has been described as the spring of life of human being and an important era in the human life span. The word adolescent comes from Latin word adolescent' which means to grow to maturity. A number of definitions have been given by developmental psychologist from time to time; the children experience a number of changes in the transitional period. The period runs between childhood and adulthood and in some time called the period of teenage. There are many issue of adolescents related to their emotional adjustment, school; home and to opposite gender, Freedom from home, Adjustment in suitable vocation, Developing a sound philosophy of life, and Health adjustment. Several studies have been incorporated explaining its adverse or negative effect of anxiety on children's social, emotional and academic success (Essau, Conradt, & Petermann, 2000). Similarly, Bharadwaj and helloed (2006) showed that emotionally stable adolescent were better in school adjustment. The mean score of boys are higher than that of girls on mental health. This indicated that the adolescent girls show better mental health than adolescent boys (Gupta & Kumar, 2010). In another study, Sridevi (2013) found that there is a negative correlation between test anxiety and academic achievement of higher secondary student. She also found that girls were more anxious than boys and rural students were more anxious than urban students in test anxiety. In a similar line, Dhyani and Singh (2013) investigated the comparison between foster home and biological nuclear families on the adjustment level of adolescents. The study included 90 respondents with age range from 14-18 year. The findings revealed girls from both the family settings showed higher level of adjustment in all the domains than boys. In another study, Devika (2014) found that level of adjustment of senior secondary school student is average. It was also found that significant difference exist in the emotional adjustment of boys and girls and no significant difference was found between male and female secondary school students with regard to family, social education and financial adjustment. Thakur and Modi (2014) found that there is significance difference between boys and girls school students with reference to overall adjustment and also found significance relationship between overall adjustment and academic achievement of school students. Jenaabadi, et. al., (2016) explores that anxiety among student was significantly and directly correlated with adjustment and its dimension including emotional adjustment, social adjustment and

## Role of anxiety and depression in adolescent's emotional adjustment

educational adjustment. Alam and Halder (2018) reported the significant negative correlation between test anxiety and adjustment among secondary students. Jayashree, Mithra, Nair, Unnikrishnan and Pai (2018) examined the prevalence of anxiety and depression among adolescents of higher school. Anxiety and Depression were found high among adolescents. Further, anxiety was found to be significant associated with depression among adolescents. Increasing age, parental education and socioeconomic factors are other factors influencing depression and anxiety but these were not statistically significant. In a very recent study, that the impact of anxiety and depression on academic achievement in students. The results indicated that girls were more anxious than the boys, while boys are more depressed than girls. Additionally, there were a significantly negative correlation between academic achievement with anxiety and depression (Khesht-Masjedi, et al., 2019)

### *Objectives*

- To study the Anxiety and adolescent emotional adjustment.
- To study the depression and adolescent emotional adjustment.
- To find out the predictor of adolescent emotional adjustment.

### *Hypothesis*

- There will be positive correlation between anxiety and adolescent emotional adjustment.
- There will be positive relation between depression and adolescent emotional adjustment.
- Anxiety and depression will be the predictor of adolescent emotional adjustment.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Sample*

The sample consists of total 100 students (out of hundred 50 male and 50 female) within age range of 16 to 18 years. Participant selected from the city private schools during the Months of January to February 2020, and who are studying in 11<sup>th</sup> class. The sample was selected from Rewari, a district of Haryana (India). Purposive sampling method was used to collect the data with the following inclusive criteria: - All students were belongs to urban area, not having any psychiatry illness and all were regular students.

### *Tools*

The following tools were administered directly without any psychological deception

1. **Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale (GAD-7), (Spitzer, Williams, Kroenke, et al., 1999):** The GAD-7 has 7 items with response options identical to the PHQ-9 and therefore can be scored as a continuous variable from 0 to 21 (with higher scores representing more severe anxiety). Although originally developed as a measure to detect generalized anxiety disorder, the operating characteristics of the GAD-7 are nearly as good for the other common anxiety disorders in clinical practice – panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder. The GAD-7 has strong internal and test-retest reliability as well as construct and factor-structure validity.
2. **Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), (Spitzer, Williams, Kroenke, et al., 1999):** The PHQ-9 consists of 9 items indicating the criterion symptoms for DSM 5 major depressive disorder. Participants are asked how much each symptom has bothered them over the past 2 weeks, with the response patterns of “not at all”, “several days”, “more than half the days”, and “nearly every day”, scored as 0, 1, 2, and 3, respectively. The PHQ-9 can be scored as either a continuous variable from 0

## Role of anxiety and depression in adolescent's emotional adjustment

to 27 (with higher scores representing more severe depression) or categorically using a diagnostic algorithm for major depressive or other depressive disorder. The PHQ-9 has strong internal and test-retest reliability as well as construct and factor-structure validity.

- 3. Adolescent's Emotional Adjustment Inventory (AEAI), (Patil, 1989):** The AEAJ tools used for the data collection purposes. The inventory made up of two parts A & B. part A elicited personal data, while part B was made up of 33 items aimed at measuring emotional adjustment among adolescents. Part B required the participant to answer to the items on Yes or No format. The reliability co-efficient of the present inventory on the basis of split half method is 0.82.

### Procedure

After establishing rapport and providing proper instruction, written informed consent was obtained from participant prior to data collection and ethical issue has been followed by keeping the participant name and personal detail confidential. Then above mentioned psychometric tools were administered on target sample for obtaining the data. The answered questionnaires were collected and scored as per manual. The scores were statistically analyzed using SPSS 10.0 version. Analysis was conducted for descriptive, correlation analyses and step wise regression analysis.

## RESULTS

The present investigation was conducted to study anxiety, depression and adolescent emotional adjustment. The obtained data were analysed by applying descriptive statistics i.e. mean and SD, and Pearson's Product Moment method of correlation. Regression analysis was conducted with adjustment as the dependent variable. Descriptive results revealed that participants scored Low on the measures of anxiety ( $Mean=5.88$ ,  $SD=3.84$ ) from a maximum of 21, depression ( $Mean=7.65$ ,  $SD=4.14$ ) from a maximum of 27, and emotional adjustment ( $Mean=12.83$ ,  $SD=5.56$ ) from a maximum of 33, (refer Table 1). The results of all these analyses are described as under,

**Table- 1 Inter-correlation Matrix**

	Generalized Anxiety	Depression	Emotional Adjustment
Generalized Anxiety	---	.65**	.58**
Depression		----	.46**
Emotional Adjustment			----
Mean	5.88	7.65	12.83
S.D	3.84	4.14	5.56

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 1 shows the correlation between anxiety, depression and adolescent's emotional adjustment. Relationship between anxiety and depression is found to be positive with a correlation coefficient of .65 which is significant at .01 levels. Anxiety is found to be positively correlated with emotional adjustment with a correlation coefficient of .58 which is significant at .01 levels. The correlation between depression and emotional adjustment is found to be positive (.46) which is significant at .01 levels.

## Role of anxiety and depression in adolescent's emotional adjustment

**Table– 2 Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression (Dependent Variable: Emotional Adjustment)**

Step	Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	Beta	Std. Error	F	P
1	Generalized Anxiety	.58	.34	.34	.58	.12	51.09	.001

Table 2 shows the results of stepwise regression analysis. The predictor measure of anxiety accounts for 34% of variance in emotional adjustment ( $R = .58$ ,  $R^2 = .34$ ), F value is equal to 51.09, which is significant at .001 level. It may be interpreted that variable anxiety appropriately predicts emotional adjustment.

### DISCUSSION

The findings from this study showed that, anxiety has a significant positive relationship with adolescent's emotional adjustment. Therefore hypothesis 1 regarding the positive relationship between anxiety and adolescent's emotional adjustment is accepted. It may be interpreted that higher the anxiety level in students higher will be the level of problems related to the emotional adjustment. These results are consistent with the conclusion of Chaturvedi (2015), as she has examined the relationship between anxiety, self concept and adjustment among adolescent. The sample consisted of 59 male and 51 female adolescent students ( $N = 110$ ) between ages fourteen to eighteen years. The results showed that anxiety and adjustment were found positive correlated. Further, results of regression analysis showed that anxiety is predictive factor for adjustment.

The current study indicated that the relationship between depression and adolescent's emotional adjustment found to be positively significant. It means that persons with high depression scored high on problems related to emotional adjustment. Thus hypothesis 2 stating a positive relation between depression and adolescent's emotional adjustment is accepted and proved here. The present study is inconsistent with earlier study, as they found the negative correlation between depression and level of adjustment (Toews & Yazedjian, 2007).

Result also found that anxiety accounts for 34 % of variance in adolescent's emotional adjustment. So, the present study conclude that anxiety is a good predictors of adolescent's emotional adjustment related problems therefore we can't ignore its contribution in adolescents adjustment. Thus, the hypothesis 3 that stated the predictor of adolescent's emotional adjustment is accepted here. Current findings are similar with the finding of Chaturvedi (2015), as she has observed in her study that anxiety is predictive factor for the adolescent adjustment.

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## Role of anxiety and depression in adolescent's emotional adjustment

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## Role of anxiety and depression in adolescent's emotional adjustment

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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