Research Paper

Anxiety, stress and depression among employed and unemployed individuals

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between anxiety, stress and depression among employed and unemployed individuals. Using correlation and t-test, a sample of 50 employed and 50 unemployed individuals in Delhi NCR were analyzed. The results supported that there is a relationship between anxiety, stress and depression. Both the groups, employed and unemployed are similar in stress and depression but there exists a significant difference in both the groups in anxiety. Therefore, it can be said that there was a significant difference found among employed and unemployed individuals only in anxiety. It is recommended to develop intervention strategies to overcome this increasing rate of unemployment.

Keywords: *unemployment, anxiety, stress, depression*

Unemployment represents the quantity of individuals who want to work but don't have a job. In other words, unemployment is a state of being out of employment. Unemployment is an enhancing catastrophe worldwide. Unemployment rate in India extended to 10.40% in Jan - Apr 2020 from 6.87% in Jan - Apr 2019. The causes of unemployment are many but one of the main causes of unemployment is the alarming growth rate of population. The current population of India is 1.3 billion. To give beneficial work to such a big number is extremely a troublesome task. Even after the improvement of science, agriculture in India is subject to the benevolence of nature. Every year a large number of labourers have to lose their jobs due to floods, droughts and other natural calamities because of which vulnerability in agriculture and unemployment emerges. The role of economic growth in India is exceptionally moderate. Moreover, the economy of India is not developed yet. This moderate economic growth neglects to give enough unemployment chances to the expanding population. Another main cause of unemployment is slow-going development of industry. Despite the fact that importance is set on industrialization yet the path of employment shaped by industrialization is hardly any. Defective planning can be considered as another cause of unemployment. There is a wide gap between demand for workers and supply of workers. Until now there has been no plan formed for elimination of unemployment.

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In India, there has been a disturbing period of mass-unemployment among the educated youth. Graduates and Postgraduates are walking pillars to post looking for employment. If we take a look at the emerging grown-ups, we will locate that one reason for which they can't commit themselves to studies is the stress of unemployment confronting them quickly toward the finish of the course. Regardless of whether they pass or fail in their examinations, there is the relatively positive prospect of unemployment. When a student chooses a course of study, he/she is guided by the possibility of gaining a living instead of contemplations of tastes or aptitudes. At the point when there is fall-off in the economy, there is overflow in the quantity of uneducated unemployed individuals. Many educated individuals are thumping at the doors of workplaces only for the position of a clerk and get frustrated when they read the words 'No Vacancy' on the entryway. The main cause of this large-scale unemployment among the educated youth in India is our defective education system.

A well-known belief in the field of psychology says that the reactions to stressful events such as unemployment take the form of stages. It is characterized by shock in the initial stage; during this an individual is still unbroken and optimistic. As unemployment continues, the individual becomes pessimistic and exhibit active distress, and ultimately becomes hopeless and unenthusiastic about their current situation. Therefore, the unemployed individuals are expected to show poorer psychological well-being because of increased levels of frustration, anxiety, disappointment, stress and depression.

Social researchers have given cross-sectional proof of an association among unemployment and a variety of indicators of psychological well-being. Moreover, researchers have also recognized that poor psychological well-being can also lead to unemployment. Various researchers attempt to address this issue by analyzing people who change after some time from work to unemployment. On the other hand, their discoveries supporting the connection among unemployment and a turn down in emotional well-being cannot be considered as a complete proof of a causal connection since something unobserved by the researcher may have changed before the beginning of unemployment that harmed an individual's emotional well-being such as unexpected health problems or disappointments at work.

Unemployment is a terrifying issue these days which cannot be avoided. The high rates of unemployment are setting up a stage for anxiety, stress, and depression among those who are unemployed. It has been seen that there is a relationship between unemployment and anxiety, stress, and depression. This relationship is very challenging for mental health experts. If this connection is not broken down, then it can be said that more than half of the population will be dealing with it. Unemployment and the associated economic concerns place a massive amount of mental and physical stress on an individual, or those near to him. This association can undoubtedly lead to onset of the anxiety, stress, or depressive symptoms. Moreover, the connection between anxiety, depression, and stress and unemployment represents an interesting issue - the more you cannot discover employment, the more anxious, depressed, and stressed you become; the less motivated you are to search for a job. Thus, this leads to the vicious cycle of dark feelings of sorrow, worthlessness, loneliness, or even suicidal attempts.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Geitona and Latsou (2018) conducted a study to investigate the effects of economic distress and unemployment in Greece. The sample consisted of 130 unemployed participants. A structured questionnaire was given to the participants which included questions on IPED, CES-D and unemployed socio-demographic characteristics. The method used was binary

logistic regression. It was concluded that significant reduction was observed in monthly income after and before unemployment.

Bordea et al (2017) conducted a research to examine how unemployed individuals cope with anxiety, depression and stress. The sample size for this research was 208 unemployed individuals aged from 20 to 65 years. Correlation and COPE scale was utilized for data analysis. The results showed that levels of anxiety, stress and depression were directly related to the coping mechanisms used by the unemployed individuals.

Kapuvári et al (2016) conducted a study to develop a scale called Unemployment Stress Scale (USS) and test its reliability and validity. 287 adult unemployed individuals were asked to fill the Spielberger Anxiety Scale, Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, Beck Depression Inventory and Hungarian's Sense of Coherence Scale. The results showed that USS had an excellent construct and criterion validity. Therefore, a useful scale was developed and can be utilized to measure stress because of unemployment. The scale also had good correlation with Beck Depression Inventory and Spielberger Anxiety Scale.

Vogli et al (2015) aimed to study the relationship between unemployment and smoking cigarettes in Italy. The sample size for this study was 4,002 adults. The method used for data analysis was regression. The results showed that the smoking rate was higher among unemployed individuals. The inability to handle critical situations in life was higher among smokers as compared to non-smokers.

Dambrun and Dubuy (2014) led an investigation to examine the impact of positive psychology intervention (PPI) on long-term unemployed individuals. The participants who volunteered for this study were given an opportunity to choose between treatment and control group conditions. Out of which, 12 participants accepted treatment conditions and others contributed to the control group conditions. During the first two weeks, the participants of the treatment group were asked to complete five positive psychology exercises, whereas participants of the control group contributed as usual in the sessions to help their job search. It was discovered that PPI significantly enhances well-being and significantly reduces psychological distress.

Olesen et al (2013) conducted a research to investigate whether mental health affects future employment or not. The sample size was N=7,176; 20-55 years old working individuals. The method used for the conduction of this research was Cross-lagged path analysis. The results showed that mental health was both a risk factor and consequences of unemployment. It was observed that poorer mental health was both the consequences of existing mental health issues and unemployment.

Butterworth et al (2012) aimed to study the function of mental well-being in discovering the conditions of future employment. The sample size used for this study was 5,846 unemployed men and women. The discoveries suggested that for women, baseline mental well-being was related to the risk of experiencing unemployment. For men, mental well-being was related with the time period of unemployment. Therefore, it can be said that unemployment was directly associated with mental well-being.

Hammarström et al (2012) conducted a research to analyze the role of gender in association between mental well-being and unemployment in Sweden and Ireland. The sample size required for the conduction of this research was 805. Correlation was used for the analysis of

data. The results, for both the countries, showed that unemployment had negative impacts on an individual's mental well-being and both men and women are affected by it. It was overall concluded that the content has major influences on the relationship between gender, unemployment and mental well-being.

Butterworth et al (2011) conducted a research to investigate whether the benefits of having a job depends on its psychological qualities such as demands and complexity, levels of control, unfair pay and job insecurity, and whether poor quality jobs are related with better mental health than unemployment. The sample size for this study was 7,155 working individuals. The authors utilized longitudinal regression for data analysis. The findings suggested that unemployed individuals had poorer mental health than those who were employed. Those who worked under poor quality jobs showed more turn down in mental health than those who were unemployed. It was concluded that the quality of job was directly related to mental health.

Hovey and Magaña (2000) conducted a study to review the relationships among acculturative stress, depression, and anxiety in a sample of 148 Mexican immigrant farm workers in the Midwest US. Immigrant farm workers with high levels of acculturative stress reported high levels of depression and anxiety. Low self-esteem, family dysfunction, high education levels, ineffective social support, low levels of religiosity, lack of choice in the decision to immigrate and live a migrant farm worker lifestyle were considerably related with high levels of depression and anxiety. The results show that immigrant farm workers who experience high levels of acculturative stress are "at risk" of experiencing high levels of depression and anxiety.

METHODOLOGY

Aim
- To assess the relationship between anxiety, depression, and stress among employed and unemployed individuals.

Objective
1. To study the relationship between anxiety, depression, and stress.
2. To examine the difference between anxiety, depression, and stress of employed and unemployed individuals.

Hypotheses
1. There will be a significant relationship between anxiety, depression, and stress.
2. There will be a significant difference between anxiety, depression, and stress of employed and unemployed individuals.

Locale of the study
The data was collected from the urban population of Delhi NCR.

Sample size and its collection
The sample size of 100 young adults, age ranging from 22-28 years, was randomly selected. These 100 participants were divided into two groups; 50 employed individuals and 50 unemployed individuals. 50 employed individuals were randomly taken from an organization, whereas 50 unemployed individuals were personally selected from students who have passed out from colleges or universities and were looking for a job.

Tool used

Name of the test	Name of the author	Year of publication	Reliability of the test	Validity of the test		
Anxiety Depression and Stress Scale (ADSS)	Pallavi Bhatnagar et al	2011	Cronbach's Alpha = 0.81	Item total correlation		
				A	D	S
			Spearman - Brown = 0.89	0.60	0.61	0.55

Brief description of the tool

The Anxiety Depression and Stress Scale is developed from the work of Pallavi Bhatnagar et al (2011). It is a nominal scale with 48 items. This test shows Cronbach's Alpha reliability of 0.81 along with the Spearman-Brown reliability to be 0.89. The test has found item total correlation to be 0.60, 0.61, and 0.55 for anxiety, depression, and stress respectively.

Procedure

To collect the data for this study, rapport was formed with the participants. The participants were briefed about the purpose of this study. Once the informed consent was taken from them, they were given a standardized questionnaire to fill - Anxiety Depression and Stress Scale (ADSS). The confidentiality of each of the participants was ensured. The researcher made sure that all the questions have been answered.

Statistical analysis

t-test and Correlation was used to analyze the data utilizing SPSS version 20.0.

RESULTS

Table 1: The table shows the correlation between anxiety, depression, and stress.

		Anxiety	**Depression**	**Stress**
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1		
Depression	Pearson Correlation	.670**	1	
Stress	Pearson Correlation	.647**	.545**	1

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The above table indicates that the anxiety is positively correlated with depression (.670) and stress (.647) at 0.01 levels.

There was a significant relationship found between anxiety, depression, and stress.

Table 2: The table shows the mean, standard deviation, t and Sig. (2-tailed) values of the various dimensions of Anxiety Depression Stress Scale used for the data collection of this study.

	Status	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**t**	**Sig.(2-tailed)**
Anxiety	Unemployed	50	5.300	4.175	2.186	.031
	Employed	50	3.680	3.165		
Depression	Unemployed	50	4.760	4.250		
	Employed	50	3.420	2.756	1.871	.064
Stress	Unemployed	50	5.420	3.608		
	Employed	50	4.780	3.290	.927	.356

The mean value of anxiety was found to be 5.300 for unemployed individuals, 3.680 for employed individuals; standard deviation was found to be 4.175 for unemployed individuals, 3.165 for employed individuals. The mean value of depression was found to be 4.760 for unemployed individuals, 3.420 for employed individuals; standard deviation was found to be 4.250 for unemployed individuals, 2.756 for employed individuals. The mean value of stress was found to be 5.420 for unemployed individuals, 4.780 for employed individuals; standard deviation was found to be 3.608 for unemployed individuals, 3.290 for employed individuals.

The t value obtained for anxiety, depression, and stress are 2.186, 1.871, and 0.927 respectively. Both the groups, employed and unemployed are similar in depression and stress but there exists a significant difference in both the groups in anxiety at 0.05 levels of significance.

DISCUSSION

Unemployment, either voluntary or involuntary, may negatively affect psychological well-being. A massive number of evidences reveals that employed individuals demonstrate higher levels of psychological well-being as compared to unemployed individuals. Unemployment has been associated with various psychological disorders such as anxiety, stress, and depression. Harmful behaviours such as suicidal thoughts, unsuccessful suicidal attempts, substance abuse, or physical violence towards peers, family members, or others are also associated with unemployment. Supporting evidence with respect to the relationship among unemployment and psychological problems comes fundamentally from investigations of populations that demonstrate a significant association among unemployment and psychological stress on each scale, from workplace environment to whole landmasses. The unemployed individuals, in general, have high levels of damaged psychological well-being such as depression, stress, or anxiety, as well as high levels of psychological well-being, premature mortality, chronic disease, or hospital admissions. Various longitudinal investigations have revealed that unemployment and high levels of depression are not just associated with each other, but that high levels of depression are consequences of unemployment. However, other forthcoming investigations have discovered that poor psychological well-being contributes to unemployment.

Two hypotheses were formulated for the conduction of this research. The first hypothesis was that there will be a significant relationship between anxiety, depression, and stress. This hypothesis has been supported by (Bordea et al, 2017), who discovered that levels of anxiety, stress and depression were directly related to the coping mechanisms used by the unemployed individuals. As earlier researchers have revealed that there is a relationship between unemployment and anxiety, stress, and depression. It was assumed that there will be a significant relationship between anxiety, depression, and stress. The correlation between anxiety, depression, and stress is depicted in table 1. The table indicates that the anxiety is positively correlated with depression (.670) and stress (.647) at 0.01 levels. Therefore, it can be said that there was a significant relationship found between anxiety, depression, and stress.

The second hypothesis was whether there is a difference between anxiety, depression, and stress of employed and unemployed individuals. This hypothesis has been supported by (Hovey and Magaña, 2000), who discovered that those who experience high levels of acculturative stress are "at risk" of experiencing high levels of depression and anxiety. The t value and its level of significance on the three dimensions of Anxiety Depression Stress

Scale are shown in table 2. The t value obtained for anxiety, depression, and stress are 2.186, 1.871, and 0.927 respectively. Both the groups, employed and unemployed are similar in depression and stress but there exists a significant difference in both the groups in anxiety at 0.05 levels of significance. Therefore, it can be said that there was a significant difference found among employed and unemployed individuals only in anxiety.

Hence, both the hypothesis, there will be a significant relationship between anxiety, depression, and stress and there will be a significant difference between anxiety, depression, and stress of employed and unemployed individuals are supported by the research findings.

CONCLUSION

There has been ample research on unemployment, but little research has been conducted on Indian unemployed population. The purpose of the research was to study the relationship between anxiety, depression, and stress among employed and unemployed individuals. The sample size of 100 young adults was randomly selected. These 100 participants were divided into two groups; 50 employed individuals and 50 unemployed individuals. For the collection of data, Anxiety Depression and Stress Scale (Pallavi Bhatnagar, 2011) was administered. The method utilized for data analysis was correlation and t-test, and SPSS 20.0 was utilized for the same.

The findings of this research are that there was a significant relationship found between anxiety, depression, and stress; and there was a significant difference found among employed and unemployed individuals only in anxiety. Therefore, the purpose and hypothesis were supported by the research findings.

There were limitations with this research. These are:
1. The sample size was small.
2. The participants might have under- or over-reported information if they supposed it to be a socially desirable response.
3. The study was restricted to only those who live in Delhi NCR.
4. More than two variables could have been studied.

Suggestions for future research:
1. The sample size can be increased to get more reliable results.
2. The research can be expanded to other cities of India.
3. There could be addition of more variables.
4. Intervention study might have been done to provide solutions to the problem of unemployment.

The increasing rate of unemployment is one of the biggest problems in India, both in the urban and rural areas. In the urban areas, there has been both underemployment and unemployment, whereas in the rural areas, there has been both industrial and educated unemployment. If this increasing problem of unemployment is not solved, then the future of India cannot be brilliant. There will be no harmony and flourishing in the country if unemployed individuals don't get a proper channel. The problem of unemployment should be taken into consideration or else it can influence unemployed individuals.

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