

Present World and Mental Issues of Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

In this 21st century, life become too fast. To survive in this fast-growing world, it is a necessity to achieve a position and become successful. Human life has some stages, in which adolescence is one of the important stages of life. Adolescents have to face different types of problems in this stage, including physical, mental, environmental, etc. Mental problems or issues affect an adolescent's personality in the future. It affects their physical health also. Depression and anxiety are the most common mental health disorders among students in India. Competition for becoming the best among all, parental pressure, peer pressure, etc. are some of the causes behind these disorders. In this paper, we will discuss the present scenario of mental health issues among adolescents in India, the meaning of mental health, the types and causes of these mental health issues, etc.

Keywords: *Mental Health Issues, Adolescents, Depression, Anxiety*

The Roman word adolescence, derived from *adolescere*, which means "to grow into adulthood," is the source of the word. Moving from the immaturity of childhood to the maturity of adulthood occurs during adolescence. Even if there isn't a specific moment or line that marks the end of childhood or the start of adolescence, experts believe that the transition from childhood to and through adolescence is made up of a series of transformations. These shifts are traumatic for children because they are biological, cognitive, social, and emotional. Between the ages of 10 and 20, this period, which is also known as the teenage years, youth, or puberty, can be broadly divided into three stages: Adolescence is the stage of "storm and stress", according to G. S. Hall.

Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical, emotional, and social development between childhood and adulthood. Adolescents face several challenges during this phase, including physical and emotional changes, academic and peer pressure, family conflicts, and environmental stressors. These challenges can lead to several mental health issues among adolescents, such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, self-harm, and suicidal tendencies. In this paper, we will discuss the mental health issues of adolescents in the present world with the help of supporting studies and references.

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Transitions in adolescence

Adolescence is occasionally seen as a stage of transition when young people start to grow apart from their parents but still don't have a clear sense of their place in society. Teenagers deal with a variety of developmental problems. They go through a variety of biological changes, social changes, cognitive changes, and emotional changes. This generation is described as being "So much alarmed that they are fairly terrifying" by Lord Byron. Half pertness, half pout, and all blush."

Physical transition

Perhaps the most obvious indicator that adolescence has started is the biological transition or puberty. More broadly stated, puberty is used to refer to all the physical changes that take place in the developing girl or boy as the individual transitions from childhood into maturity.

Cognitive transition

A cognitive transition is a second aspect of the progression through adolescence. Adolescents think in ways that are more sophisticated, effective, and all around more complex than those of youngsters. This shows that there are several cognitive centers.

Social Transition

Adolescents' social interactions undergo significant alterations at the same time as their biological, cognitive, and emotional development. The development of friends and family relationships as a person progresses through the adolescent years has been extensively documented by developed mentalists. The rise in the amount of time people spend with their peers during the social transition into adolescence is one of its most notable features.

Mental Health

Mental health is a "state of well-being where individuals realize their strengths, can cope with the usual demands of life, work successfully and fruitfully, and make a contribution to their communities," according to the World Health Organization.

Mental Health Issues of Adolescents

- **Depression:** Adolescents frequently experience depression as a mental health problem. An estimated 3 million adolescents in the United States struggle with depression (Kessler et al., 2012). Adolescents who experience depression may experience a variety of negative effects, including low academic performance, substance addiction, and suicidal thoughts. A family history of depression, stressful life events, academic pressure, and genetic factors are among the risk factors for depression in teens (Hammen, 2009).
- **Anxiety:** Another prevalent mental health problem among teenagers is anxiety. Anxiety disorders are thought to affect about 25% of teenagers in the United States (Merikangas et al., 2010). Adolescents who experience anxiety may experience a variety of detrimental effects, including poor academic performance, social isolation, and substance usage. Genetic factors, anxiety in the family, stressful life events, and academic pressure are among the risk factors for anxiety in teenagers (Hettema et al., 2006).
- **Substance Abuse:** Adolescent substance misuse is a prevalent issue. According to estimates, 9% of teenagers in the US take illegal substances (Johnston et al., 2021). Adolescent substance abusers may have a variety of negative effects, including poor scholastic results, social isolation, and mental health problems. Peer pressure,

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familial strife, and stressful life events are risk factors for teen substance misuse (Kuntsche et al., 2008).

- **Self-harm:** Self-harm is a common problem among adolescents. It is estimated that around 17% of adolescents in the United States engage in self-harm (Nock et al., 2013). Self-harm can have several negative impacts on adolescents, such as physical harm, mental health issues, and suicidal tendencies. The risk factors for self-harm among adolescents include family conflict, peer pressure, and academic pressure (Laye-Gindhu and Schonert-Reichl, 2005).
- **Suicidal Tendencies:** Suicidal tendencies are a common problem among adolescents. It is estimated that around 8% of adolescents in the United States attempt suicide (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). Suicidal tendencies can have several negative impacts on adolescents, such as physical harm, mental health issues, and social isolation. The risk factors for suicidal tendencies among adolescents include depression, anxiety, substance abuse, self-harm, and stressful life events (Brent et al., 2009).

Current State of Mental Health among Adolescents

Adolescent mental health has emerged as a global public health concern, with one in six individuals worldwide falling under the age group of 10-19 years. Depression, anxiety, eating disorders, substance abuse, and self-harm are some of the commonly observed mental health problems in this age group. According to a report by the World Health Organization (WHO), depression is the leading cause of disability among adolescents, and suicide is the third leading cause of death (WHO, 2019).

A meta-analysis of 174 studies conducted across 50 countries revealed that the prevalence of depression among adolescents was 10.7%, with girls being more vulnerable than boys (Essau et al., 2019). The prevalence of anxiety disorders in the same study was 8.3%, with a slightly higher prevalence among boys than girls. Another study conducted among school-going adolescents in India found that 40.4% of participants had some form of mental health issue (Sharma et al., 2020).

Factors Contributing to Adolescent Mental Health Issues

Various factors contribute to the high prevalence of mental health issues among adolescents. Some of the commonly observed factors are as follows:

- **Social Media Use:** The excessive use of social media has been linked to increased levels of anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem among adolescents. A meta-analysis of 30 studies found a significant correlation between social media use and poor mental health outcomes (Woods & Scott, 2016).
- **Academic Pressure:** The pressure to perform well in academics can lead to stress, anxiety, and even depression among adolescents. A study conducted among Chinese adolescents found that academic pressure was significantly associated with depressive symptoms (Liu et al., 2019).
- **Family Conflicts:** Adolescents who experience frequent conflicts with their family members, such as parents, siblings, or extended family, are at an increased risk of developing mental health issues. A study conducted among Korean adolescents found that family conflict was significantly associated with depressive symptoms (Song et al., 2020).
- **Substance Abuse:** Substance abuse, including the use of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs, has been linked to various mental health issues such as depression, anxiety,

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and suicidal ideation among adolescents. A study conducted among Spanish adolescents found that substance abuse was significantly associated with a higher risk of suicidal ideation (Jiménez et al., 2020).

- **Preventive and Treatment Measures**
- Preventive measures and early intervention are crucial to addressing adolescent mental health issues. Some of the commonly recommended measures are as follows:
- **Promoting Healthy Lifestyles:** Encouraging adolescents to adopt healthy lifestyle habits such as regular physical exercise, adequate sleep, and a balanced diet can significantly improve their mental health outcomes.
- **Increasing Awareness:** Raising awareness about mental health issues and reducing the stigma associated with seeking help can help adolescents overcome the barriers to seeking professional help.
- **Building Resilience:** Building resilience among adolescents through various interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based interventions, and positive psychology interventions can help them cope with stress and overcome mental health issues.
- **Providing Access to Professional Help:** Ensuring access to mental health services and resources, such as counseling, psychotherapy, and medication, can significantly improve the mental health outcomes of adolescents. Schools and community organizations can play a crucial role in providing access to mental health services, as well as educating parents, teachers, and caregivers about the signs and symptoms of mental health issues in adolescents. Additionally, governments and policy-makers can support mental health initiatives by allocating resources and funding towards the development and implementation of mental health programs that cater to the unique needs of adolescents. By addressing mental health issues among adolescents, we can ensure that they have the support and resources they need to thrive and reach their full potential.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the present world is witnessing several mental health issues among adolescents, such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, self-harm, and suicidal tendencies. These mental health issues can have severe negative impacts on adolescents, such as poor academic performance, social isolation, physical harm, and mental health issues. Therefore, it is essential to identify the risk factors that contribute to these mental health issues and address them effectively. Schools, families, and healthcare professionals must work together to provide support and resources to adolescents to address their mental health issues and promote their overall well-being.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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