

ABSTRACT

Background

Mental disorders and mental health problems seem to have increased considerably among adolescents in the past 20-30 years. The rise has been driven by social change, including disruption of family structure, growing youth unemployment, and increasing educational and vocational pressures.

Adolescents face rapidly changing challenges in their social and physical environments. Globalisation, round-the-clock-available-technology gadgets & media, reduced family-bonding time, stressful working conditions of parents, altered food-habits, etc. all of this leads to rapid changes in their socio-cultural systems, making the children more prone to risk of mental disorders.

Prevalence in India

A few studies from low and middle-income countries have identified family structure and relationships, social class, urbanisation and school failure as some factors associated with mental disorders in adolescents. In addition to the general causes mentioned above, the traditional codes of conduct continue to influence the cultural practices toward adolescents.

In line with Indian collectivistic cultural values, even in today's time, youngsters are expected to conform and be loyal to family norms and group harmony. Given the diversity of cultures and differences within India, it is important to assess the Common Mental Disorders prevalent among its youth.

Prevalence in western countries

Due to massive globalization, substance abuse, more liberty & responsibility & therefore competition, at a comparatively lesser age, less-family connected culture, altered food habits, etc. add to the chances of increasing mental instability. It is a general assumption that the prevalence is higher in Western countries more because they are vocal about their mental problems compared to the social stigma attached & the suppression attitude in India.

Aim:

To find the prevalence of mental health problems in school children.

Methodology:

A Survey Study was conducted to collect data from 500 students, inclusive of 252 females and 248 males, the age range was in 12-15 years. The demographic data comprised of 25 separate questions based on mental condition of the students. Furthermore, the data was collected in hardcopy forms from the students in individual format and various anxiety & depressive disorders were measured and analysed using Mean and Standard Deviation.

Results:

Data was studied on a sample size of 500 comprises of 252 girls & 248 boys. The analysed data showed that there is almost equal prevalence of mental health problems in both males & females. Of the total sample of 500 students approximately 10% children showed Anxiety symptoms and 5% showed Depression symptoms

Conclusion:

From the survey study it is clear more males showed depression symptoms when compared to females & females exhibited more anxiety symptoms compared to their male counterparts. They panic equally. Overall the difference in the prevalence in the disorders between both the sexes was not much, except for the separation anxiety disorder.

Keywords:

Mental health, problems, adolescents, school children, anxiety, etc.