

AN EXPLORATION OF DEPRESSION AMONG FEMALE YOUTH RESIDING IN HOSTELS

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Abstract

In today's time, it has become essential for youths to move away from their families for studies or job purposes. Depression is a growing concern among youth, particularly among females residing in hostels, as they often face unique stressors such as academic pressures, homesickness, and social adjustments. This study focuses if the female youth hostellers within the age group of 18-30 in India are encountering depression as they live away from their loved ones along with analysing their levels of depression. For this study, quantitative data was collected through standardized depression scales such as, PHQ-9, Patient Health Questionnaire. It has been observed that youths, especially females have to face a lot of social and emotional challenges as they step out of their homes, which may impact their mental health, especially causing depression, raising concerns about existing issues of mental health cutback. The study also highlights the role of peer support, recreational activities, and professional counselling in mitigating depressive symptoms. By addressing these concerns, the study aims to promote psychological well-being and foster a supportive environment for female hostellers to thrive academically and socially.

Keywords: Depression, mental health, female, youths, migrants, homes, distant.

Introduction**Female Youth Hostellers**

Young females living far from their home have hoarded significant attention due to various social, economic and psychological factors. This relocation is influenced by educational and career opportunities driving the section to urban centres. This trend, at the same time, is followed by numerous challenges and obstacles regarding cultural expectancy, concern for safety and access to resources. (Rao et al., 2021). This autonomy achieved by living away from homes does cherish career growth and development, but sailing over complex social dynamics and isolation are its potential requirements.

Moreover, the available social networks, support of family and societal norms also shape the experience of these young females. Research has shown that often young women develop coping abilities and resilience while others experience financial stress, familial nostalgia and the strain to create balance within societal expectations and their own desires. (Smith & Jones, 2020). For formulation of supporting schemes and interventions, it is critical to develop conceptual understanding of above dynamics.

Depression

Depression is an ordinary but consequential mood disorder that results in effecting an individual's physical aspects as sleep and appetite along with deteriorating their self-worth, optimism and concentration. It incorporates various types, with distinct characteristics and varying severity. Major

Depressive Disorder (MDD) involves extreme episodes of depressive symptoms that hinder the regular working. Persistent Depressive Disorder (PDD), or dysthymia, is a chronic type of depression that is usually less severe but with long-lasting effects. Bipolar Disorder involves depressive episodes of hikes in mania or hyper mania alternatively. Depressive episodes of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) occur at a certain time in the year, generally in winter. Knowledge of various forms of depression is significant for accurately determining depressive symptoms with their treatment processes. (American Psychiatric Association, 2022).

Depression Among Female Youth Hostellers

The alarming rate of depression increasing in young female hostellers within the age group of 18-30, is an issue which needs serious attention. They lose social and family support at the stage where it is needed most, develop in them feelings of isolation and solitude, hence complexing the stress levels. (Fang et al., 2020). Along with this, the have to bear the pressure to maintain their own cultural identity with the cultures they encounter.

Another significant factor contributing to depression in young, female hostellers is financial insecurity. It can be sometimes difficult to nobble financial responsibilities with employment and school. (Miranda et al., 2019). Economic insecurity often has been a cause of persistent stress, an initial symptom of depression. Moreover, the anxiety of failing to balance own desires and family's expectations raises the severity of symptoms of

depression. With all above, their mental health is seriously affected due to harassments and discrimination based on gender, which can increase threefold due to the dual discrimination they face regarding their social position after immigration. (Wang et al., 2021). Due to the lack of social relationships and mental health services, young females are unable to receive the care and assistance they need, hence causing a prolonged feeling of anxiety and fear, which are themselves the salient symptoms of depression.

Due to all the above-mentioned stressors, female youth hostellers require certain mental health services to achieve mental peace and stabilization. Their feelings of loneliness can be reduced by providing them safe places and promoting social integration by community help-based programmes, which can also encourage them to cope with their difficulties. (Kirmayer et al., 2011). Furthermore, Financial strains can be dealt by working upon the education and job opportunities for the group, while treating and recognizing the various symptoms and levels of depression in female youths will better support their mental health and welfare.

Here are a few studies on the topic:

1. Prevalence and Correlates of Depression among Female University Students Living in Hostels in Pakistan” by Kausar, R., & Munir, M. (2014): This study focuses on the raising issues of depression in female students residing at the university hostels in Pakistan. It correlates factors like academic pressure, lack of social support and economic instability using Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) to measure the effected level of depression. Participants showed a high presence of depressive symptoms as a result.
2. Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among College Students in a Women’s Hostel: A Cross-Sectional Study” by Shamsuddin, K., Fadzil, F., Ismail, W. S. W., Shah, S. A., Omar, K., Muhammad, N. A., ... & Mahadevan, R. (2013) : This study measured strain, anxiety and levels of depression through its cross-sectional study. It uses Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21) for measuring depression in female college students living in hostels. As a result, moderate to high levels of depression was found in the participants.
3. Psychological Well-being and Its Relationship with Depression and Anxiety among Female Hostel Residents” by Singh, R., & Singh, S. (2017) : This research assessed the psychological wellbeing of females residing in hostels and its correlation with depression and anxiety for which a set of standardized questionnaire was used. The result of the study suggested a strong negative correlation between psychological wellbeing, depression and anxiety, focusing on the need of

certain measures to assist the mental health of the group.

4. Impact of Hostel Life on Mental Health of Female Students”: by Ahmad, N., & Siddiqui, S. (2016). The study focused on the effect of living in hostels on the mental health of female students, especially depression using a mixed-methods approach, with the combination of qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys. It signified that academic strain, personal disagreements and homesickness significantly leads to depression.
5. Factors Influencing Depression among Female College Hostel Residents in India" by Sharma, B., & Rani, A. (2019): The purpose of this work was to identify levels of depression in female students residing in college hostels. It used Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) for a survey of 300 students. It was resulted that academic strain, lack of assistance and inadequate recreational activities contribute majorly to depression. This research demand improved services for mental health care and managing depression.

Research Objectives

- To analyse level of depression among female youth hostellers.

Methodology

The research is on “depression among female youth migrants” carried out particularly at Greater Noida in India. This study focuses on the students or bachelorettes with the age group of 18-30 years of age living distant from their homes.

Tool Used:

Data was collected by applying PHQ-9 (Patient health questionnaire) which is a quick depression assessment of 9 items. This questionnaire was developed by Dr Robert L. Spitzer, Dr. Janet B.W. Williams, Dr. Kurt Kroenke, and colleagues at the Regenstreif Institute and Columbia University with a four-point scale, while the one I used to be based on a 5-point scales: 0 (Never), 1 (Rarely), 3 (Sometimes), 4 (Often) and 5 (Always).

Reliability And Validity:

The items demonstrate high internal reliability with range of 0.86-0.89 (Kroenke et al., 2001), while the test-retest reliability of the is also strong, with studies showing high correlation coefficients (e.g., $r = 0.84$ over a 48-hour period), indicating that the results are stable over time when the individual's condition does not change. (Löwe et al., 2004).

The PHQ-9 has good construct validity, as it correlates significantly with other established measures of depression, such as the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and the Hamilton

Depression Rating Scale (HDRS). (Kroenke et al., 2001). The diagnostic accuracy is high, with sensitivity typically around 88% and specificity around 88% for a cut-off score of 10 or greater. (Kroenke et al., 2001). PHQ-9 also shows significant correlation with measures of functional impairment and quality of life, supporting its convergent validity. (Gilbody et al., 2007).

Data:

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The data is collected by field work by contacting and asking participants if they voluntarily want to respond to the questions based on PHQ-9, out of which the data was finally analysed and interpreted, concerning their will, privacy and maintain confidentiality. Secondary data is collected from journals previous research papers.

Sampling:

Convenient sampling was used to conduct the research. The female participants between age group of 18-30 were asked to respond willingly and readily available. Convenient samples made this easier to collect data of 100 participants according to their interest also answering their queries. Though it a type of non-probability sampling, the selection of participants is somewhat random within the immediate contact group.

Result

The data collected through the survey was analysed, including mean and standard deviation. The study's findings revealed that isolation from home and loved ones do have a significant impact on mental health of female youths.

Total	1362
Mean	13.75
Standard Deviation	7.36

From the above table it can be stated that female youth hostellers do experience moderate – severe depression living away from their homes. Mean and standard deviation is interpreted in Excel based on the scores, while on the same basis histogram graph is also plot.

Discussion

The findings of this study stresses that moderate depression is more likely in female youth hostellers living far from their homes, due to significant stressors such as academic strain, economic instability, the idea to align with the existing culture, safety issues and many more, which lead to develop critical symptoms of depression. This highlights the severe need of mental health services in hostel settings, while the responsibility of

community-based programmes rises up in laying down assistance and care to treat loneliness along with developing resilience in the female youths. Also, academic and financial aids can also be provided to mitigate the grievous depression and its corresponding symptoms.

Conclusion

As findings of this result suggested a moderate to high level depressive symptoms frequently occurring in female youth hostellers of age group of 18-30. Hence, to mitigate the impact of the factors affecting depression, regular mental health screenings and providing counselling services are a must, with their special management in hostels. Females in contemporary world, are indeed forming vast proportion of skills, fostering economic and worldwide development of the country. Therefore, their needs and welfare should also be taken utmost care. Also, future researches should focus on understanding the long-term impacts of living in hostels with evaluation of effective strategies. By emphasising on the mental health concerns of female youth hostellers, we can promote an appropriate environment for their fruitful growth and success.

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