A Psychological Study of Depression and Suicidal Tendency in General Stream Students

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Abstract - She presents study aimed to examine depression and suicidal tendency among students of the general academic stream. A total of 120 students were selected as the sample using the simple random sampling technique. Depression was measured using the depression scale developed by Tiwari and Chauhan (1972), which consists of 40 items. Suicidal tendency was assessed using the suicidal tendency scale developed by Bhatt and Meghanathi (2000), comprising 40 items. A 2 × 2 factorial research design was employed in the present study. For statistical analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and karl parson's product–moment correlation method was used. The results revealed that academic stream had no significant main effect on depression (f = 2.10), and gender also did not show a significant main effect on depression (f = 1.49). Moreover, no significant interaction effect of academic stream and gender on depression was found (f = 0.55). However, academic stream showed a significant main effect on suicidal tendency (f = 8.06), whereas gender did not have a significant effect on suicidal tendency (f = 3.18). The interaction effect of academic stream and gender on suicidal tendency was also found to be non-significant (f = 1.57). Further, a low positive correlation was observed between depression and suicidal tendency (r = 0.21), indicating that as the level of depression increases, suicidal tendency among students also increases. The present study was limited to students only; therefore, future researchers may extend the scope of the study by selecting employees from various organizations as samples and conducting research on a larger population.

Key words: Depression, suicidal tendency, stress, arts and commerce stream

I. INTRODUCTION

When we observe our surroundings, it becomes evident that there are very few individuals who have not experienced mental stress, anxiety, or depression. Owing to today's highly demanding lifestyle, rapid changes have taken place in society. In this era of accelerated transformation, adapting to continuously changing circumstances has become a major challenge, resulting in increased psychological stress among people. As a consequence of such stress, serious effects are observed on an individual's physical, cognitive, and behavioral responses. This often leads individuals to experience depression, conflict, and pressure. In the 21st century, human beings are motivated by physical, psychological, social, and other forms of drives to fulfill their needs or to achieve specific goals. However, when these efforts fail or when obstacles arise in the fulfillment of needs or attainment of goals, individuals tend to experience frustration and depression.

The causes of depression are both personal and situational, and individual differences are clearly evident. The level, type, and causes of depression vary at each stage of life. For instance, in young children, excessive attachment to mobile phones and junk food often leads to frustration and depression when these are unavailable. Among adolescents and youth, factors such as competitive examinations, job-related competition, exposure to obscene content on mobile devices, and similar influences contribute to depressive tendencies. During middle adulthood, concerns related to children's education, their marriage, and financial responsibilities often become sources of depression. In old age, lack of proper care, inadequate nutrition, physical illnesses, and deteriorating mental health frequently result in depression. Thus, the degree and nature of depression

vary from individual to individual across different stages of life.

The overall condition of human society has become increasingly serious due to changes in lifestyle and dietary patterns. As a result, the prevalence of issues such as aggression, lack of tolerance, suicidal tendencies, jealousy, excessive action-oriented pressure, and excessive cognitive pressure has increased. In contemporary times, the rising level of aggression among youth can be attributed to factors such as excessive engagement in video games, continuous exposure to violent scenes in films, lack of parental time and attention, and unrealistic expectations imposed by parents on their children. Additionally, an increase in suicidal tendencies among today's youth is also being observed.

Factors that contribute to suicidal tendencies include a mismatch between skills and high ambitions, ego-driven attitudes coupled with a lack of tolerance, unemployment, failure in competitive examinations, failure in romantic relationships, family responsibilities, domestic conflicts, social harassment, inappropriate choice of life partner, financial stress, excessive involvement in online activities, association with negative peer groups, and various forms of addiction.

II.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Young Adults and Aggression: A Comparative Study of Gender Differences
Nahida Shaban & Dr. Pardeep Kumar (2016)
The present study examined the level of aggression and gender differences in aggression among young adults. The sample consisted of 100 participants (N = 100), including 50 males and 50 females, drawn from Lovely Professional University, Punjab. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 25 years, with a mean age of 22.44 years. Data were collected over a period of two months using the Aggression Scale.

The findings of the study revealed some noteworthy results. Female participants (30%) were found to exhibit a higher level of aggression compared to male participants (22%). Overall, 26% of the participants demonstrated a high level of aggression, indicating that nearly one-fourth of the sample fell on the higher end of the aggression continuum. However, despite the higher percentage of aggression observed among females, the difference between male and female participants was not statistically significant (t = −0.568, p > .05). These findings challenge the commonly held belief that males are more aggressive than females. The study suggests that patterns of aggression are changing in contemporary society, and that both males and females experience nearly similar levels of aggression in modern times.

2. Suicidal Tendency among Depressive and Normal People
Urvesh Chouhan & Dr. Jigar Parikh (2018)
The primary objective of this study was to compare the level of suicidal tendency between individuals suffering from depression and normal individuals. For this purpose, a sample comprising 30 individuals diagnosed with depression and 30 normal individuals, aged between 20 and 30 years, was selected. Depressive individuals were identified from various hospitals and clinics in Surat district using the Beck Depression Scale.

Suicidal tendency was assessed using the Suicidal Tendency Scale developed by Bhatt, D. J., and Meghana, R. G. (2004). The findings of the study indicated that individuals with depression exhibited significantly higher levels across most dimensions of suicidal tendency compared to normal individuals. Based on these results, the researchers emphasized the need for implementing appropriate guidance, counseling, and support programs to prevent suicidal attempts among youth.

III.   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To examine the main effect of academic stream (Arts and Commerce) on depression.
2) To examine the main effect of gender on depression among students.
3) To examine the interaction effect of academic stream and gender on depression.
4) To examine the main effect of academic stream (Arts and Commerce) on suicidal tendency.
5) To measure the main effect of gender on suicidal tendency among male and female students.
6) To examine the interaction effect of academic stream and gender on suicidal tendency.
7) To examine the relationship between depression and suicidal tendency.

5. HYPOTHESES

1) There will be no significant main effect of academic stream on depression.
2) There will be no significant difference in depression with respect to gender.
3) There will be no significant interaction effect of academic stream and gender on depression.
4) There will be no significant main effect of academic stream on suicidal tendency.
5) There will be no significant main effect of gender on suicidal tendency.
6) There will be no significant interaction effect of academic stream and gender on suicidal tendency.
7) There will be no significant relationship between depression and suicidal tendency.

6. VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

1. Independent Variables
- Academic Stream: Arts and Commerce
- Gender: Male and Female
2. Dependent Variables
- Depression
- Suicidal Tendency
3. Control Variables
- The study will be limited to students from Kheda District only.
- The study will be confined to students from the general stream; science stream students will not be included in this research.

7. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

7.1 Frustration Scale
In the present study, the Frustration Level Test (F.L.T.) developed by Tiwari and Chauhan (1972) was used to measure the level of frustration. This test assesses four major dimensions of frustration:
1) Regression   3) Resignation
2) Fixation   4) Aggression
The scale consists of a total of 40 items.

- Reliability:
The original authors of the scale reported reliability coefficients ranging from 0.82 to 0.95 for the different dimensions of the test. The reliability coefficient for the total score was reported to be 0.92, indicating high reliability.

- Validity:
According to the test manual, the validity coefficient of the scale was found to be very high. The test does not have a fixed time limit; however, it generally requires 25 to 30 minutes for normal and visually impaired children, and approximately 50 to 55 minutes for children with speech and hearing impairments.

7.2 Suicidal Tendency Scale
The Suicidal Tendency Scale was developed by Bhatt and Meghnathi (2000). The scale consists of 40 items and measures four dimensions:
Personality characteristics,
Impulsive disturbances,
Conflict-oriented thinking, and
Self-harm tendencies.

- Reliability:
To establish the reliability of the scale, a sample of 160 rural and urban males and females aged between 16 and 30 years from Surendranagar district was selected. Split-half reliability was determined using the odd-even method, yielding a correlation coefficient of 0.92, which indicates high reliability. Additionally, test–retest reliability was assessed and found to be 0.83, further supporting the consistency of the scale.

- Validity:
For establishing validity, two groups were formed: a normal group (N = 40) and an abnormal group (N = 40). The abnormal group included individuals diagnosed with depression, those who had attempted suicide, and other individuals identified as abnormal by clinical psychologists. Results indicated that suicidal tendency was significantly higher in the abnormal group compared to the normal group. A t-test was employed to examine group differences, and a significant difference was found at the 0.01 level, confirming higher suicidal tendency among the abnormal group.

8. RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study employed a survey research design. The primary objective of the study was to examine

depression and suicidal tendency among students of the general stream. The Frustration Level Test developed by Tiwari and Chauhan (1972) was used to assess frustration, while the Suicidal Tendency Scale developed by Bhatt and Meghnathi (2000) was used to measure suicidal tendency.

A 2 × 2 factorial design was adopted in the study. The sample was selected using the simple random sampling technique, and a total of 120 students were included as participants.

9. DATA COLLECTION

In the present study, a total sample of 120 students was selected from schools in Kheda District. The sample comprised 30 female and 30 male students from the Arts stream, and 30 female and 30 male students from the Commerce stream. All participants were selected using the simple random sampling method.

10. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

1. Academic Stream has no significant effect on Depression

SR	Variable A	Mean	N	F	Sig
1.	Arts(A1)	106.77	60	2.101	NS
2.	Commerce(A2)	112.07	60		

Significance level: 0.05 = 3.92
0.01 = 6.86

Table No. 10.1 indicates that the mean score of Arts students (A_1) is 106.77, whereas the mean score of Commerce students (A_2) is 112.07. The mean depression score of Commerce students is higher than that of Arts students. However, the obtained F value is 2.101, which is not statistically significant. Therefore, no significant difference is observed, and the previously formulated null hypothesis is accepted.

2. Gender has no significant effect on Depression.

SR	Variable B	Mean	N	F	Sig
1.	Girls(B1)	111.65	60	1.492	NS
2.	Boys(B2)	107.18	60		

Significance level: 0.05 = 3.92
0.01 = 6.86

Table No. 10.2 shows that the mean score of female students (B_1) is 111.65, while that of male students (B_2) is 107.18. The mean depression score of female students is higher than that of male students. The obtained F value is 1.492, which is not significant. Hence, no significant difference is found, and the null hypothesis is accepted.

3. Academic Stream and Gender have no significant interaction effect on Depression.

SR	Variable A	Mean		N	F	Sig
		Girls	Boys			
1.	Arts (A1)	110.37	106.43	60	0.559	NS
2.	Commerce (A2)	112.93	111.2	60		

Significance level: 0.05 = 3.92
0.01 = 6.86

Table No. 10.3 reveals that among Arts students, the mean depression score of females is 110.37 and that of males is 106.43. Among Commerce students, the mean score of females is 112.93 and males is 112.20. The obtained F value is 0.559, which is not significant. Thus, no significant interaction effect of academic stream and gender on depression is observed, and the null hypothesis is accepted.

4. Academic Stream has no significant effect on Suicidal Tendency.

SR	Variable A	Mean	N	F	Sig
1.	Arts(A1)	82.57	60	8.067	0.01
2.	Commerce(A2)	87.55	60		

Significance level: 0.05 = 3.92
0.01 = 6.86

Table No. 10.4 shows that the mean suicidal tendency score of Arts students is 82.57, while that of Commerce students is 87.55. The mean score of Commerce students is higher than that of Arts students. The obtained F value is 8.067, which is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, a significant difference is found, and the null hypothesis is rejected.

5. Gender has no significant effect on Suicidal Tendency.

SR	Variable B	Mean	N	F	Sig
1.	Girls(B1)	84.42	60	3.189	NS
2.	Boys(B2)	90.62	60		

Significance level: 0.05 = 3.92
0.01 = 6.86

Table No. 10.5 indicates that the mean suicidal tendency score of female students is 84.42, whereas that of male students is 90.62. Male students show a higher mean score compared to female students. However, the obtained F value is 3.189, which is not statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

6. Academic Stream and Gender have no significant interaction effect on Suicidal Tendency.

SR	Variable A	Mean		N	F	Sig
		Girls	Boys			
1.	Arts(A1)	77.23	87.9	60	1.572	NS
2.	Commerce(A2)	91.6	93.47	60		

Significance level: 0.05 = 3.92
0.01 = 6.86

Table No. 10.6 shows that among Arts students, the mean suicidal tendency score of females is 77.23 and males is 87.90. Among Commerce students, the mean score of females is 91.60 and males is 93.47. The obtained F value is 1.572, which is not significant. Therefore, no significant interaction effect is observed, and the null hypothesis is accepted.

7. There is no significant correlation between Depression and Suicidal Tendency.

SR	Variable	Mean	r	Sig
1.	Depression	109.42	0.221	0.01
2.	Suicide tendency	87.45		

Significance level: 0.05 = 0.12
0.01 = 0.16

Observation of Table No. 10.7 reveals a low positive correlation (r = 0.221) between depression and suicidal tendency. This correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that as the level of depression increases, suicidal tendency also tends to increase. There is no significant correlation between Depression and Suicidal Tendency.

11. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- With respect to the academic stream variable, no significant effect was found on depression. Therefore, the previously formulated hypothesis was accepted.
- With respect to the gender variable, no significant effect was found on depression. Hence, the previously formulated hypothesis was accepted.
- No significant interaction effect of academic stream and gender was found on depression. Therefore, the previously formulated hypothesis was accepted.
- With respect to the academic stream variable, a statistically significant difference was found in suicidal tendency at the 0.01 level. Hence, the previously formulated hypothesis was rejected.

- With respect to the gender variable, no significant effect was found on suicidal tendency. Therefore, the previously formulated hypothesis was accepted.
- No significant interaction effect of academic stream and gender was found on suicidal tendency. Hence, the previously formulated hypothesis was accepted.
- A correlation coefficient of 0.221 was found between depression and suicidal tendency, indicating a low positive correlation between depression and suicidal tendency.

12. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The findings of the study cannot be generalized beyond students of the Arts and Commerce streams.
- The study was limited to Kheda District only.
- The study was conducted exclusively on school-going students.

13. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- The present study may be extended beyond school students to include professionals and employees from various occupational fields.
- Based on the findings of this study, further advanced research and doctoral-level investigations may be undertaken.
- The results of this study may prove useful for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the field of suicide prevention.
- The study may be replicated among students of the Gujarat State Board as well as boards of other states to examine depression and suicidal tendency from a psychological perspective.

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