Role Of Social Assistance In Resolving Mental Health Problems Faced By College Students: A Sociological Study In Union Territory Of Chandigarh

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Abstract

The late teen and early youth years are generally regarded as the most fun times in a person's life since they are free from significant responsibilities and are healthy enough to engage in a wide range of entertaining activities. A traditional perception of a college-bound student is that of someone who enjoys a variety of recreational activities, is constantly surrounded by friends, and interacts with parents as little as possible. The general public perception of a college student's life does not include anything depressing or gloomy. The reality, though, is considerably different because people in this age category engage in a variety of dangerous behaviors, including drinking, and drug usage, which raises enough concerns to challenge the widespread belief that being youthful equates to happiness. Young college students experience stress for a variety of reasons, including peer pressure, sadness, drug addiction, and other issues. The goal of this study is to determine whether or not these young college students receive social assistance from friends, family or other acquaintances in times of need. Depression is often characterized by an unhappy mood and is defined as a disease of detachment and isolation. It is crucial to understand the feelings of persons who are afflicted with this illness. However, depression is not defined here as a psychiatric disorder, that is, as something that a person is born with. Instead, it was demonstrated that this disease resulted from various interactions with members of one's social system. Considering this and to understand the problems that these young college students face the present study tries to highlight the social variables that contributes stress, anxiety, depression in them and do they get social support from their family, friends, relatives or any other.

Keywords: Mental health, College students, social assistance.

Introduction

The term "depression," which is frequently used in the fields of social science and behavioral science, particularly in the fields of medical sociology, psychology, and social psychology, refers to people's depressed mental states. According to data from the World Health Organization, depression is predicted to overtake heart disease as the second most common cause of illness burden by 2020. Depression is a common mental illness that manifests as low energy, an unhappy mood, a loss of interest or pleasure, guilt or low self-worth, trouble sleeping or eating, and difficulty concentrating. In addition, anxiety symptoms are frequently present together with depression. An individual may experience significant harm from these issues if they become chronic or recurrent and impair their ability to perform daily duties and responsibilities (WHO; 2012)[1]. Most people consider mental health in general to be a psychology topic. However, it is the responsibility of sociologists to establish mental health issues as a field of study. The topic of youth mental health has long been discussed. A person of college age is primarily concerned with the tasks of creating a stable identity and developing intimate patterns. Although emotional crises can take many different forms, many of these problems can be understood as results of these tasks. Regardless of a country, genre, or school of thought, sociology is recognized as an academic field that studies the effects of human behavior. Scholarly discourse has focused on the impact of an individual's social surroundings on their health for a considerable amount of time. Social variables have a significant impact on an individual's physical and mental health, as is now abundantly clear. The process of socialization is what molds a person's social behavior structure. The upbringing plays a significant role in shaping an individual's personality and behavior, both in terms of socially acceptable and unacceptable forms. During childhood and adolescence, a variety of social influences may come together to influence the development of behavioral issues. Stable maternal traits, such as intelligence, level of education, and self-worth, influence children's socialization experiences and, in turn, how likely they are to develop behavioral issues. Parental traits tend to hold steady over time, therefore these effects are most likely to be felt most strongly during the beginning stages of children's behavioral issues and in terms of their long-term stability. The way children perceive danger and loss, as well as the caliber of their interactions with peers, also have a role in maintaining these behavioral patterns (Menaghan, 2009).

Review of Literature

In order to overcome the duality of Western thought which holds that the individual and society are distinct entities and that biology has no bearing on social structure Francis (2006) contends that the sociology of emotion is the perfect realm in which the biological and the social might interact.

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[1] www.who.int/mental_health/management/.../who_paper_depression_wfmh_2012.pdf viewed on 26.12.2016.

According to Daniel Siegel (1999), a clinical professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine, "The level of social support we experience in our daily lives helps modulate our stress response." In fact, holding the hand of someone you love and trust or looking at a picture of them might lessen both the neurological reaction to a painful shock and anticipatory anxiety.

Fields, Copp, and Kleinman (2006) demonstrated how emotions can be investigated using a symbolic interactionist approach to increase understanding of how inequality is reproduced in daily life. As King (1964) highlights that the young adults are typically observed to exhibit apathy, unconscious rebellion, indecision, and psychosis in their behavior.

According to Shumaker and Brownell (1984), social support is defined as a resource exchange between two people that is thought to be intended to improve the recipient's well-being by either the provider or the recipient. According to the buffering hypothesis of social support, people who have a strong social network find it easier to adjust to significant life changes, particularly unfavorable ones (Thoits, 1982).

Theoretical Framework

[2]Social support theory: Social support theory as it exists now is the result of the efforts of numerous researchers from a variety of fields rather than the creation of a single person. The theory, which defined social ties in specific terms such interactions or relationships between persons, was established and gained popularity as a field of intense academic research in the middle of the 1970s and early 1980s. Francis Cullen is a prominent figure in the development of social support theory. He highlighted the significance of social support in criminology and made a distinction between the effects of social support at the macro and interpersonal levels in his 1994 presidential address to the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. According to social support theory, social networks and interactions are extremely important for a person's wellbeing, especially in stressful or difficult circumstances. According to this hypothesis, having access to relationships that provide emotional support, practical help, informative guidance, or a sense of belonging can have a favorable effect on one's mental and physical health. It highlights how crucial social ties are for reducing the damaging impacts of stressful situations and boosting resilience. People who are actively involved in their social networks are more likely to have access to support and aid when they are struggling.

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[2] Cohen, S., & Wills, T. A. (1985). Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin, 98*(2), 310–357. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.98.2.310

Objectives

1. To assess young college student's mental health. What are the causes that makes them feel sad, lonely, unhappy or depressed.

2. To emphasize whether or not these young college students receive social assistance from friends, family, or other acquaintances in times of need.

Methods and Tools

This study presents depression, anxiety, stress as a condition brought on by a variety of social causes rather than as a clinical ailment or psychological issue. The researcher has endeavored to examine how the respondent's social support network may either worsen or mitigate depression, anxiety, stress. Whether or not these young college students receive social assistance from friends, family, or other acquaintances in times of need. The samples came from five colleges at UT Chandigarh. A sample framework of 100 respondents, 20 from each college was assembled in order to collect primary data. The samples were further divided into 10 male and 10 female students from each college. To accomplish the sample selection objective, simple random sampling method has been employed. The research is quantitative and qualitative in nature. During interview, the respondents were questioned about the causes of stress, anxiety, and depression. In addition, the respondents were questioned from whom they get assistance when they are in need and feeling low, alone, or sad.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Union Territory of Chandigarh with the previously mentioned objectives in mind. The samples came from five colleges at UT Chandigarh. The names of the respondents and the collages were kept confidential for the purpose of the study.

Table 1: Do you feel sad, lonely, unhappy or depressed?

	Male	Female	Total
Always	8(16)	10(20)	18(18)
Often	20(40)	27(54)	47(47)
Sometimes	15(30)	7(14)	22(22)
Rarely	4(8)	4(8)	8(8)
Never	3(6)	2(4)	5(5)
Total	50 (100)	50(100)	100(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

Table 1 displays the percentage of respondents who report feeling sad, lonely, unhappy or depressed. It was discovered that 47 percent of respondents 'often' experienced these mental health problems. Of the respondents, 22 percent said they 'sometimes' deal with these problems. 18 percent participants reported feeling sad, lonely, unhappy, or depressed 'always.' The percentage of respondents who said they had 'never' experienced mental health problems were 5 percent.

Table 2: What causes you to feel sad, lonely, unhappy or depressed?

	Male	Female	Total
Examination stress	25(50)	35(70)	60(60)
Peer pressure	28(56)	40(80)	68(68)
Relationship stress	27(54)	35(70)	62(62)
Stress because of physical looks	28(56)	38(76)	66(66)
Family discord	15(30)	37(74)	52(52)
Total	50 (100)	50(100)	100(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

*The respondents have given multiple answers. Total percentage was calculated from the total number of both undergraduate students and graduate students separately (i.e., 50 each).

Table 2 highlights the causes that makes the respondents feel sad, lonely, unhappy or depressed. 60 percent respondents said that Examination stress makes them feel sad, lonely, unhappy or depressed. While, there were 68 percent respondents face peer pressure. 62 percent respondents are dealing with relationship stress. 66 percent respondents said they face Stress because of physical looks. 52 percent respondents suffer from family discords. It was found that female respondents (76 percent) Stress because of physical looks as they believe that physical looks is very important. According to Palosaari, Aro, and Laippala (1996), girls from divorced households did not exhibit an increased risk of depression because their attachment to their father shielded them from low self-esteem.

Table 3: Do you find social assistance in times of need?

	Male	Female	Total
Always	8(16)	5(10)	13(13)
Often	15(30)	14(28)	29(29)
Sometimes	10(20)	17(34)	27(27)
Rarely	10(20)	6(12)	16(16)
Never	7(14)	8(16)	15(15)
Total	50 (100)	50(100)	100(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

Table 3 highlights the social assistance that these respondents get in times of need. 13 percent respondents always find assistance. There were 29 percent who often find assistance. While, there were 27 percent who sometimes get assistance in times of need. It was found that there were 16 percent respondents who rarely get assistance. 15 percent respondents never find assistance in times of need.

Table 4: Was social assistance beneficial to you personally when you were dealing with a mental health problem?

	Male	Female	Total
Yes	40(80)	46(92)	86(86)
No	10(20)	4(8)	14(14)
Total	50 (100)	50(100)	100(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

Table 4 displays the percentage of respondents who found social assistance beneficial when they were dealing with a mental health problem. It was found that 80 percent of male respondents and 92 percent of female respondents found social assistance helpful while dealing with the mental health problem. While, there were 20 percent of male respondents and 8 percent of female respondents who mentioned that they did not find social assistance helpful. The study supports the social support theory which highlights that people who are actively involved in their social networks are more likely to have access to support and aid when they are struggling.

Table 5: Do you feel that seeking social assistance can help someone deal with mental health problems?

	Male	Female	Total
Yes	45(90)	47(94)	92(92)
No	5(10)	3(6)	8(8)
Total	50 (100)	50(100)	100(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

Table 5 highlights the belief of the respondents. It mentions that do respondents believe that seeking social assistance can help someone deal with mental health problems. It was found that 90 percent of male respondents and 94 percent of female respondents were positive about the statement. They do believe that getting social help can help people who are struggling with mental health issues. While, there were 10 percent of male respondents and 6 percent of female respondents disagreed with this statement.

Conclusion

The main resource for boosting self-esteem, which is a prerequisite for preventing depression, is parental support. Students and parents frequently disagree on the discipline or institution that the student wants to attend. When children follow their parents' wishes and select a discipline in which they had no interest at first, they may score poorly academically, which causes them to become resentful of their parents. They believe they have lost out on important time, or even worse, the chance to succeed. Lack of parental support reduces self-esteem, and this affects every other connection, making depression more likely. Another incident that may be the cause of these students' depression is a fight between parents. These young college students care a great deal about how they appear. If they believe their appearance falls short of expectations, they become sad and may even begin to isolate themselves. If the person's significant others react negatively, their misery intensifies.

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