

Introduction to Research

“Topic: Risk factors for depression in adolescents”

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1. Introduction

“Definition of main concepts and what this study is about”

Depression is a serious and common medical illness that has a negative impact on how an individual feels, thinks and also the way an individual acts (Tu and Gao, 2021). Adolescent depression has become one of the rising concerns that have impacted the lives of many adolescents. There are various factors like peer pressure, academic expectations and so on that cause adolescent depression. This study will mainly focus on analyzing the risks factors of depression in adolescents.

Aim

This research will mainly aim to analyses the risk factors that are related to the depression in adolescents and also to find out the best practices for overcoming it.

Objectives

- To understand the risks factors for depressions in adolescent
- To analyses the effects of depression on adolescents
- To find out the best practices for overcoming the risk factors of depression in adolescent

2. Background

Contextual information

Adolescent depression has become one of the major health problems that causes feelings of sadness that is persistent and also causes people to lose interest in activities. It has the major impact on how adolescents behave, feel and think (Schleider *et al.*, 2022). It results in causing functional, emotional and physical problems. Various issues like academic expectations, peer pressure and the body that is constantly changing bring various ups and downs in the life of adolescents. However, in case of some of the teens the low feelings often become more than just the feelings that are temporary, it becomes depression. It has become rising health concerns that are impacting the maximum numbers of adolescents. Adolescence is the phase of life in which the future is decided and bad experience at this stage often leads to deciding the course of life of the adolescent (Schleider *et al.*, 2022). Another major issue in this context is that this is the phase of where the teens are unable to determine or understand whether they are going through depression or not which further increases the concern.

“Rationale of the research”

Adolescent depression has become one of the rising concerns that have impacted the lives of many adolescents. There are various factors like peer pressure, academic expectations and so on that cause adolescent depression. This research will mainly focus on analysing the various factors that have the major roles in causing the teen depression. The risk related to adolescent depression will also be determined in this research. Lastly, the best practices that can be adopted for overcoming the risk that are related to the adolescent will also be determined in this research. The major purpose of this research is to find out the risk factors for depression in adolescents and it will be conducted for social purposes. The results and findings gathered on this research will allow the parents to understand the consequence of depression on adolescents. The adolescents will also be able to understand when they will have the chances of going through depression. Lastly, the healthcares will also be able to use the information in a proper manner for taking the proper initiatives for overcoming this mental health issue. The major significance of this research is to understand the risk and impact of adolescence depressions. It will be helpful for mitigating this mental health issue to some extent.

3. Methodology

Research methodology is the process that involves various sets of methods and principles used throughout a study that enables them to proceed with the appropriate direction of conducting research studies (Pandey and Pandey, 2021). It assists the researcher to achieve successful completion of the research using relevant and supportive plans and procedures.

Data collection / Search strategy

Within the research methods, data collection plays one of the most vital roles because it allows the researcher to develop proper strategy for collecting required data for the research topic being studied throughout (Corti, 2018). According to academic definition, this process is what enables a researcher to collect, measure, and analyse accurate information through relevant sources of different varieties. Considering that the following study has focused on analysing depression within adolescents and the risk factors associated with causing it, the study has followed the utilization of **Qualitative Secondary data collection**. In that sense, it is a **systematic literature review** that is conducted using qualitative data through secondary data collection sources. Qualitative data collection refers to the concentration given on gathering detailed non-numerical information. It is followed with the utilization of secondary sources which is a process where the researcher is not directly involved in the process of collecting actual data (Cole *et al.*, 2018). The existing works of other authors, researchers, or professionals are sourced by the researcher using their published work to analyze and evaluate accurate outcomes. It determines the usage of relevant data sources such as books, articles, or journals published based on the topic being studied.

The qualitative data for this research is gathered using the data published on Google Scholar for utilizing a wider source of information. It has helped this research to find every possible information that can help understand the risk factors influencing depression in adolescents. Hence, with the use of a systematic approach to reviewing literature, the researcher intends to draw out the most important and effective reasons.

Data analysis

This is a method that involves techniques providing research study with appropriate and effective methods to analyze the collected data. In that sense, this research has utilized thematic analysis (Trinh *et al.*, 2018). **Thematic analysis** is recognized as one of the most effective techniques for analysing qualitative secondary data within a research that helps the identification of detailed information from data gathered. It enables the researcher to examine sets of trends, patterns, and ideas from the existing works more closely. Therefore, thematic analysis is chosen as an appropriate and justifiable approach for analysing information for this study. It is more appropriate for this research because it has proven

effectiveness in the analysis of qualitative data (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018). More confederation has been given to analysis and evaluation of most appropriate and prevalent risk factors that are most likely to cause depression within adolescents.

Ethical considerations

Based on the overall understanding of the research process, it is clear that this research does not involve active human involvement. It has helped reduce many more risks of facing ethical problems for the researcher (Hasan, 2021). Nevertheless, secondary or primary, any research being conducted to contribute to a specific field or topic must cater to every possible ethical consideration. Taking this into consideration, this research has followed the ethical considerations of conducting a secondary qualitative research appropriately. Data used for this research are pre-identified and consents have been reasonably presumed from necessary authorities to use the study subjects within the study (Tu and Gao, 2021). It also ensures that no data has been used for, inclined to, or has attempted to cause distress or damage to anyone and that also involves assurance for not re-identifying the participants. Every data collected, analysed, and used has been protected by the “Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the UK”. This research will make sure that the data will only be used for the purpose of the research and will not be manipulated. No occurrence of manipulation of data or disclosure of its content is practiced (Pietilä *et al.*, 2020).

4. Results

“Presentation of the main characteristics of the studies selected”

Themes	Authors	Year of publication	Book/Journal/Websites
Theme 1: Depression	• Patrikakou, E.N. • Laufer, M.E.	• 2021 • 2018	“Book Review on Adolescents in the Internet Age. School Community Journal, 31(2), pp.347-351.” “Depression and self-hatred. In The suicidal adolescent (pp. 21-27). Routledge.”

Theme 2: Risks factors for depressions in adolescent	● O’Keeffe, S., Martin, P., Goodyer, I.M., Wilkinson, P., Consortium, I. and Midgley, N. ● Pearson, N., Sherar, L.B. and Hamer, M.	● 2018 ● 2019	“Predicting dropout in adolescents receiving therapy for depression. Psychotherapy Research, 28(5), pp.708-721.” “Prevalence and correlates of meeting sleep, screen-time, and physical activity guidelines among adolescents in the United Kingdom. JAMA pediatrics, 173(10), pp.993-994.”
Theme 3: Effects of depression on adolescents	● Sadowski, H. and Gaffney, B. ● Irish, M., Solmi, F., Mars, B., King, M., Lewis, G., Pearson, R.M., Pitman, A., Rowe, S., Srinivasan, R. and Lewis, G.	● 2018 ● 2019	“Gender identity disorder, depression, and suicidal risk. In A stranger in my own body (pp. 126-136). Routledge.” “Depression and self-harm from adolescence to young adulthood in sexual minorities compared with heterosexuals in the UK: a population-based cohort study. The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health, 3(2), pp.91-98.”

Theme 4: Best practices for overcoming the risk factors of depression in adolescent	- Guidelines in Practice. - Midgley, N., Reynolds, S., Kelvin, R., Loades, M., Calderon, A., Martin, P., O'Keeffe, S. and IMPACT Consortium.	2022 2018	"Patient scenarios: depression in children and young people. [online] Available at: <https://www.guidelinesinpractice.co.uk/mental-health/patient-scenarios-depression-in-children-and-young-people/454987.article> [Accessed 14 April 2022]." "Therapists' techniques in the treatment of adolescent depression. Journal of psychotherapy integration, 28(4), p.413."
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Table No 1: Thematic Analysis

(Source: Created by the learner)

Theme 1: Depression

As stated by Patrikakou (2021), depression is a serious and common medical illness that has a negative impact on how an individual feels, thinks and also the way an individual acts. It is a serious medical issue but it is treatable. It causes the feeling of sadness and also causes an individual to lose interest in doing these kinds of activities. Depression can occur to every individual ranging from teens to adults and leads to numbers of troubles ranging from the emotional to physical problems. There are a number of symptoms that are related to depression and an individual starts to lose interest in the activities that they once enjoyed. There occurs a change in appetite and starts to lose weight or gain weight which are unrelated to dieting. An individual faces difficulties in sleeping or they sleep too much.

Another major symptom of depression is increased fatigue and the loss in energy. The purposeless physical activities increase like inability to sit still or hand wringing or the movements of the speech also becomes slow. An individual starts to feel worthless and the thoughts of suicide or death often come into the mind of an individual who is depressed.

As per Laufer (2018), there are a number of medical conditions that mimic the symptoms that are similar to depression and it is necessary to rule out the medical condition while analysing the symptoms of depression. The common medical conditions that mimic the symptoms of depression are vitamin deficiency, brain tumors, thyroid problems and so on. Depression has an impact on one individual out of 16 individuals in a particular year and it has also been found that one in six people face depression at least once in their life (Laufer, 2018). Depression can occur in any stage of life but normally it occurs first in the teenage to mid 20s. It has also been found that women are more likely to face depression as compared to men. Adolescent depression has also increased highly recently which is one of the major mental health issues that are being faced by the health care.

Theme 2: Risks factors for depressions in adolescent

As stated by O'Keeffe *et al.* (2018), the exact cause of depression have not been known but there are a number of issues that can lead to depression. One of the major causes of adolescent depression is academic expectations. There are a number of instances when the parents unknowingly inflict lots of pressure on children by having a high amount of expectation in academic performance. When the adolescent becomes unable to meet the academic expectation they start to feel worthless which can often lead to depression. Adolescence is the age at which the body changes in a rapid manner and often it changes in a manner which is not desired by the adolescent. This also leads to depression for many of the adolescents. Traumatic experience faced in life is another major reason that often leads to depression. The traumatic life experiences that are faced mainly include events like divorce of parents, death of someone who is close or the loss of pets and so on. Any of the events that cause trauma or distress or even the major changes in lifestyles can play a major role in triggering depression in the individual who is vulnerable.

As per Pearson *et al.*, (2019), social situations or the family circumstances is also the reason that triggers adolescent depression. Unfortunately, there are a number of teens who live in circumstances that are often difficult for them. Family circumstances that are negative like domestic violence, poverty, substance abuse or other types of family issues often cause stress to the adolescents. This stress that is faced by the teen often leads to depression and negatively impacts the life of the adolescents. Genetics is another major cause that leads to adolescent depression. It is the proven fact that depression often runs in the family. There is a genetic basis in the case of depression.

According to O’Keeffe *et al.* (2018), there are a number of medical conditions that lead to the symptoms of depression. It can often be the symptoms that are caused due to some other medical illness. The common medical conditions that mimic the symptoms of depression are vitamin deficiency, brain tumors, thyroid problems and so on. Medications and also the consumption of the drugs that are illegal also leads to depression in numbers of instances.

Theme 3: Effects of depression on adolescents

As stated by Sadowski and Gaffney (2018), depression in adolescence has a number of negative effects and can often be life-changing. Depression has been found with a number of other harmful disorders such as eating disorders. This often leads to eating disorders that leads to obesity, bulimia and anorexia. Due to the effect of depression, adolescents often tend to engage in a number of harmful activities like consumption of drugs and alcohol and drugs and smoking cigarettes. Many of the adolescents engage themselves in illegal use of drugs that are illicit, group assault, truancy, and also petty theft. Depressed adolescents engages themselves in non-violent and violent crimes as well as the sexual behaviors that are promiscuous.

As per Irish *et al.* (2019), one of the most serious consequences of depression is suicide as it is being the leading cause of death that occurs between the age of 15-19 years. It just falls behind the deaths that are caused due to homicide and accidents. Adolescence is the stage of life in which the path of the future is decided. When the adolescent goes through depression at this age and if it is not diagnosed and treated it will ruin the future of the adolescent. This is because an adolescent who is depressed will not be able to perform in an effective or productive manner in schools.

Theme 4: Best practices for overcoming the risk factors of depression in adolescent

According to Gaffney, (2018), there are a number of practices that can be undertaken for overcoming the risk factors that are related to adolescent depression. One of the best practices that can be applied for overcoming the risk factor of adolescent depression is psychotherapy. Different types of psychotherapy that can be effective for depression are interpersonal therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy. This can be done one-on-one with the patient, with the member of the family or in a group (Guidelines in Practice, 2022). The major practices of psychotherapy include learning about the cause that has led to depression. It also needs to be learned how to identify and make changes in the thoughts and behaviors that are not healthy for an adolescent. The focus also needs to be centered on exploring the relationships and experiences. The adolescents also need to be provided with help for easing symptoms of depression like anger and depressions.

According to Midgley *et al.* (2018), finding the right medication is another major practice that will allow the adolescent to get rid of the depression. It is important to understand that every individual is different and that makes providing the proper medications necessary which will

improve the chances of getting rid of depression. Some of the medication takes weeks to start showing its effects. So it is important to encourage adolescents to not give up on medication. In the case of adults anti-depressants are risky. However in the case of the adolescents it outweighs the risks. It needs to be noted that the anti-depressants play a major role in reducing the risks that are related to suicides. The traits that are inherited play a significant role in how antidepressants affect different individuals. The genetics also plays a major role in having the effect of the medications. Therefore, it becomes necessary to keep the adolescents to not to give up on the medications that they are provided.

5. Discussion

“Discussion of the findings in relation to the aim of research”

Based on the results of this research, it has been found that depression is one of the rising health concerns that has an impact on adolescence. In theme 1, the research was conducted on the concept of depression and it was found that depression is a major mental health concern. It can occur in any age group and in any age group and this has become predominant in most adolescents. In theme 2, it has been found that there are a number of factors that lead to depression in the case of adolescence. The risk factor that is related to depression is due to a number of factors and one of the most common factors is high academic expectations (Krause *et al.*, 2019). Lot of expectations are placed upon the adolescents to provide excellence in academics. However, when they fail to deliver performance then it leads to depression. Various circumstances that an individual adolescent goes through also leads to depression and the circumstances includes domestic violence, sexual abuse, sudden death of someone and so on.

The impacts that adolescents go through due to depressions is also very alarming. Many adolescents indulge themselves in criminal activities. The changes of alcohol consumption, smoking or various kinds of harmful drugs increase. All these activities are harmful for adolescents and also for society. And in the worst case scenario it also has the chances of leading to the suicides (Gaffney, 2018). However, this is a mental health condition and it can be cured. Choosing the right type of medications is necessary which will help in the treatment of adolescents' depression. There are a number of approaches that can be adopted for treatment of adolescents with depression and the best method is considered to be psychotherapy. The results of the secondary research shows that adolescent depression is one of the major concerns of society and health but it can be treated by applying the proper methodology.

“Recommendations for future policy and health and social care practice”

Based on the findings of this research, following recommendations can be drawn for “health and social care practices” in the case of adolescents:

- It is recommended that the health and social care setting needs to focus on understanding the cause of depressions. In most of the cases, the symptoms of the depression are identified and are provided with the medications. It is recommended that the focus should be eliminating the cause of depression in adolescence. This process will be helpful in improving the services of health and social care by providing effective services.
- In the case of social care, it is suggested that depressed adolescents need to be provided with a cheerful environment. The cheerful environment along with the medications will help in reducing the depression among adolescents.
- It is also suggested that the awareness of the issues should be promoted so that the parents will be able to identify the symptoms. This is important because in many cases the symptoms are not identified and it leads to harmful consequences.

“Importance of the findings for health and social care”

The findings will be important for the health and social setting because it has discussed the various factors that lead to depression. The best practices that will help in treatments of adolescents' depression have also been discussed in this research. All these findings can be used by the health and social care for improving their services towards adolescents' depression. As this has become one of the major mental health issues, the finding of the research will contribute towards improving the services that are provided by health and social care (Lindqvist *et al.*, 2020). It will also play a major role in helping the health and social care for undertaking proper approaches to mitigate adolescence depression.

“Limitations of the research”

This research has been successful in achieving desired outcome but it has also faced few limitations. The limitation faced by this research is in the case of data collection or the availability of secondary data. One of the major limitations faced by this research is that most of the published data did not match completely with the type of data that the researcher was looking for. Therefore, the limitation faced by the research is limited. As the data was not collected by the researcher, there was no proper measure for measuring the accuracy of the collected data. Lastly, this research has the limitation that the proper cause that leads to depression could not be achieved. However, various factors that trigger adolescence have been found successfully.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that adolescent depression has become one of the rising concerns that have impacted the lives of many adolescents. There are various factors like peer pressure, academic expectations and so on that cause adolescent depression. This research has mainly focused on analysing the various factors that have the major roles in causing the teen depression. The risk related to adolescent depression has also been determined in this research. Lastly, the best practices that can be adopted for overcoming the risk that are related to the adolescent have also been determined in this research. The major purpose of this research is to find out the risk factors for depression in adolescents and it has been conducted for social purposes. The findings of the research will be beneficial for the health and social care for providing proper care to the depressed adolescents.

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