Assessing Depression, Anxiety And Stress Levels Of College Students Using Daas 21 Scale

Amina shiftha M[1], Archana R Nambiar[2]
[1]Student, [2] Assisstant professor
[1]Msc psychology department, [2]department of psychology
Msc psychology, Jain (deemed university), Bangaluru, karnataka, india

Abstract

This study aims to assess depression, anxiety, and stress levels among college students using the DASS-21 (Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale-21) instrument. Given the growing mental health concerns within the college demographic, especially with the unique pressures of academic, social, and financial demands, the need for reliable tools to evaluate these mental health conditions is paramount. The DASS-21 scale, a concise and validated measure, is widely used for assessing the severity of these psychological states. Through a cross-sectional survey, students' responses to the DASS-21 items will provide insights into prevalent mental health issues and help identify key risk factors. Findings from this study aim to inform university counseling services and mental health support initiatives, contributing to strategies for early intervention and support systems tailored to student needs.
Keywords: Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale-21, Postgraduate students of Jain University.

I.INTRODUCTION

Mental health has emerged as a critical area of concern in academic environments, particularly among postgraduate students who often face intense pressures and expectations. This study aims to assess the levels of depression, anxiety, and stress among postgraduate students at Jain University using the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21). The DASS-21 is a widely recognized instrument designed to evaluate the emotional states of individuals, providing insights into their mental well-being. Postgraduate students frequently encounter a unique set of challenges, including rigorous academic demands, financial pressures, and the transition to advanced levels of study. These factors can contribute to significant psychological distress, impacting their overall academic performance and quality of life. Understanding the prevalence and severity of these mental health issues is crucial for developing effective support systems and interventions.

This article will explore the findings from our assessment, highlighting the importance of addressing mental health within academic institutions and suggesting strategies for fostering a supportive environment for students. By analyzing the results, we aim to contribute to the growing body of literature on student mental health and inform policies that promote well-being in higher education settings.

II.BACK GROUND

Depression, anxiety, and stress affect college students' academic performance and general well-being. The DASS-21 is a validated tool widely used to measure these conditions, providing essential data for institutions to tailor mental health resources.

III.REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The academic performance of college students can be significantly impacted by mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression. The Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale – 21 Items (DASS-21) is a psychometric tool that measures these three dimensions of psychological distress. This review examines the theoretical underpinnings of how these factors influence academic outcomes and how the DASS-21 can be utilized to assess their effects.

The DASS-21 is a widely used tool consisting of 21 items that assess three dimensions: stress, anxiety, and depression. Each dimension is measured through 7 items, with responses indicating the frequency and severity of symptoms experienced over the past week (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995).

Relevance to Academic Performance: The DASS-21 allows for a comprehensive assessment of how stress, anxiety, and depression individually and interactively affect academic performance. By quantifying these psychological factors, researchers can better understand their influence on students' academic outcomes and identify areas for intervention.

IV.RESEARCH METHADOLOGY

4.1 Population and sample

The study targeted 100 postgraduate students from Jain University using a simple random sampling technique. The sample included both male and female students, aged 22 to 50, representing diverse academic disciplines.

4.2 Data and Source Data

Data were collected using the DASS-21 questionnaire to assess mental health across depression, anxiety, and stress. Participants also filled out demographic sheets. An online survey administered via Google Forms specifically targeted postgraduate students at Jain University, who completed the DASS-21 as part of the study.

4.3.1 Cognitive-Behavioral Theory:

Data were collected through online surveys, including a demographic sheet and the DASS-21 scale. The primary data source was self-reported responses on the DASS-21 scale.

4.3. Theoretical Framework

Assessing Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels of College Students Using the DASS-21 Scale

4.3.1 Cognitive-Behavioral Theory: Highlights how negative thoughts, often amplified by academic pressures, contribute to depression and anxiety.

4.3.2 Transactional Model of Stress and Coping: Emphasizes individual coping mechanisms in response to stressors.

4.3.3 Three-Factor Model of DASS-21: Positions depression, anxiety, and stress as interrelated yet distinct constructs, guiding targeted intervention.
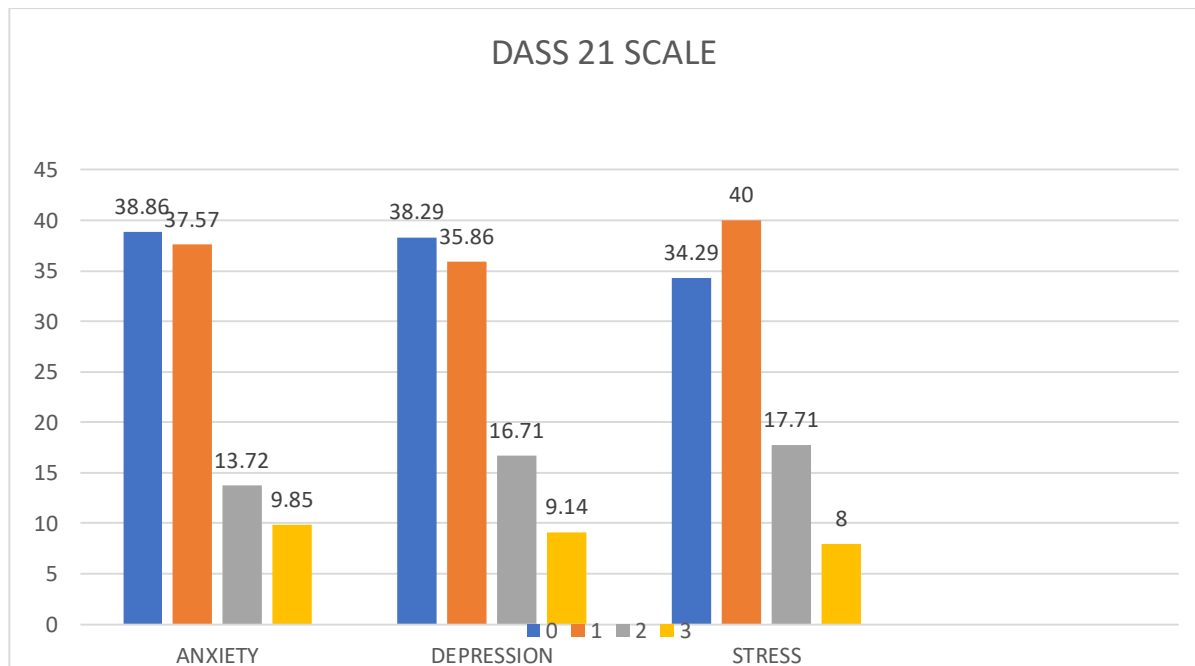
4.4.5 Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that students will report significant levels of depression, anxiety, and stress, as measured by DASS-21

V.RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings suggest a concerning landscape of mental health among postgraduate students at Jain University. The data indicates that nearly 67% of students experience the mild to extremely severe levels of depression, 29% of students have moderate level of anxiety. while a staggering 73% report moderate to extremely severe anxiety. 30% students have extremely severe type of anxiety. These mental health issues can detrimentally affect students' academic performance, leading to decreased concentration, motivation, and overall engagement in their studies.

Interestingly, a higher percentage of students reported normal stress levels (63%), indicating that stress may not be the primary concern compared to depression and anxiety. However, the 12% of students experiencing severe stress highlights that even a smaller group can be significantly affected.

Even without specific academic performance data, this study can explore how mental health influences students' self-perception and general well-being, providing valuable insights into the need for mental health support within academic environments.

DASS 21 SCALE

	ANXIETY	DEPRESSION	STRESS
0	38.86	38.29	34.29
1	37.57	35.86	40
2	13.72	16.71	17.71
3	9.85	9.14	8

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION

DEPRESSION		ANXIETY		STRESS	
Normal	23%	Normal	27%	Normal	63%
Mild	19%	Mild	9%	Mild	9%
Moderate	29%	Moderate	25%	Moderate	13%
Severe	10%	Severe	9%	Severe	12%
Extremely Severe	9%	Extremely Severe	30%	Extremely Severe	3%

Figure : Depression, Anxiety and Stress among the participants.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study highlights the need for enhanced mental health resources within universities. Establishing support systems can aid in fostering well-being, benefiting both student mental health and academic success. Further research could explore the broader impact of mental health on educational outcomes through longitudinal studies.

II. LIMITATIONS:

This study has some limitations which might have affected the study.

1. Lack of Academic Performance Data: Without GPA or grade information, direct correlation with academic outcomes was limited.
2. Sample Size: The sample restricts generalizability.
3. Single Population: The focus on Jain University postgraduate students limits broader application.

VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

IX.REFERENCES

1. Kumaraswamy, N. (2013). Academic stress, anxiety and depression among college students: A brief review. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities, 5*(1), 135–143.

2. Hysenbegasi, A., Hass, S. L., & Rowland, C. R. (2005). The impact of depression on the academic productivity of university students. *Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics, 8*(3), 145–151.

3. Ericson, P. M., & Gardner, J. W. (1992). Two longitudinal studies of communication apprehension and its effects on college students' success. *Communication Quarterly, 40*(2), 127–137. https://doi.org/10.1080/01463379209369828

4. World Health Organization. (2012). *Depression: A global crisis. World Mental Health Day*. Occoquan, VA: World Federation for Mental Health.

5. Stallman, H. M. (2008). Prevalence of psychological distress in university students: Implications for service delivery. *Australian Family Physician, 37*(8), 673–677.

6. Bayram, N., & Bilgel, N. (2008). The prevalence and socio-demographic correlations of depression, anxiety and stress among a group of university students. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 43*(8), 667–672. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-008-0345-x

7. Adlaf, E. M., Gliksman, L., Demers, A., & Newton-Taylor, B. (2001). The prevalence of elevated psychological distress among Canadian undergraduates: Findings from the 1998 Canadian Campus Survey. *Journal of American College Health, 50*(2), 67–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/07448480109596009

8. Sidik, M. S., Rampal, L., & Kaneson, N. (2003). Prevalence of emotional disorders among medical students in a Malaysian university. *Asia Pacific Family Medicine, 2*, 213–217. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1444-1683.2003.00089.x

9. Iqbal, S., Gupta, S., & Venkatarao, E. (2015). Stress, anxiety & depression among medical undergraduate students & their socio-demographic correlates. *Indian Journal of Medical Research, 141*(3), 354–357. https://doi.org/10.4103/0971-5916.156571

10. Sohail, N. (2013). Stress and academic performance among medical students. *Journal of College Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan, 23*(1), 67–71.

11. Alvi, T., Assad, F., Ramzan, M., & Khan, F. A. (2010). Depression, anxiety and their associated factors among medical students. *Journal of College Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan, 20*(2), 122–126.

12. Ghayas, S., Shamim, S., Anjum, F., & Hussain, M. (2014). Prevalence and severity of depression among undergraduate students in Karachi, Pakistan: A cross-sectional study. *Tropical Journal of Pharmaceutical Research, 13*(10), 1733–1738.

13. Rizvi, F., Qureshi, A., Rajput, A. M., & Afzal, M. (2015). Prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress (by DASS scoring system) among medical students in Islamabad, Pakistan. *British Journal of Medical Research, 8*(1), 69–75. https://doi.org/10.9734/BJMMR/2015/17193

14. Jadoon, N. A., Yaqoob, R., Raza, A., Shehzad, M. A., & Zeshan, S. C. (2010). Anxiety and depression among medical students: A cross-sectional study. *Journal of Pakistan Medical Association, 60*(8), 699–702.

15. Ali, M., Asim, H., Edhi, A. I., Hashmi, M. D., Khan, M. S., & Naz, F. (2015). Does academic assessment system type affect levels of academic stress in medical students? A cross-sectional study from Pakistan. *Medical Education Online, 20*(1), 27706.

16. https://doi.org/10.3402/meo.v20.27706

17. Lovibond, P. F., & Lovibond, S. H. (1995). The structure of negative emotional states: Comparison of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS) with the Beck Depression and Anxiety Inventories. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 33*(3), 335–343.

18. Azim, S. R., & Baig, M. (2019). Frequency and perceived causes of depression, anxiety and stress among medical students of a private medical institute in Karachi: A mixed method study. *Journal of Pakistan Medical Association, 69*(6), 840–845.

19. Kumar, B., Shah, M. A., Kumari, R., Kumar, A., Kumar, J., & Tahir, A. (2019). Depression, anxiety, and stress among final-year medical students. *Cureus, 11*(31). https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.4257

20. Syed, A., Ali, S. S., & Khan, M. (2018). Frequency of depression, anxiety and stress among the undergraduate physiotherapy students. *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences, 34*(2), 468–471. https://doi.org/10.12669/pjms.342.12298