

# Depression and Psychological well-being among adolescents who lost their siblings to Kashmir conflict

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## ABSTRACT

Kashmir has been a conflict zone from decades now. The citizens of the place are continuously suffering because of this conflict. The everyday death and blood have grave impacts on the adolescent population of the valley. This study is an attempt to find out the relationship between depression and psychological well-being among adolescents who lost their siblings to the conflict. The “Beck Depression Inventory (2nd edition, 1996) and psychological well-being scale of Ryff (1995) were used to examine depression and psychological well-being respectively. For the purpose of the present study, a total sample of 50 adolescents from various regions of Kashmir division were taken into consideration. Pearson’s correlation coefficient, Regression and T-test were used and accordingly the results were evaluated. The correlational analysis revealed that there is a negative correlation between depression and psychological well-being. The regression analysis revealed that 45% of variance in psychological well-being can be attributed to depression. The comparative analysis revealed that there is a significant mean difference in both psychological wellbeing and depression with respect to gender. Psychological well-being among adolescent boys was higher than that of adolescent girls. As far as depression is considered girls have more depression than that of boys.

***Keywords: Depression, Psychological Well-being, Siblings, Conflict, Adolescents.***

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by abrupt physical, cognitive, social and emotional changes. For the majority of adolescents, it is a stage noticed by blistering psychological changes, increased independence, changes in family relationship that is more interdependent, prioritizing peer affiliations, initiation of intimate partner relationships, identity formation, increased apprehension of moral values, and cognitive and emotional development. Apart from the “positive growth” observed during adolescence, it is also a developmental period recognized for turmoil and challenges (Sales & Irwin, 2013). The World Health Organisation (2001) defines ‘Adolescents’ as people aged 10-19 years.

Depression is hatred to activity and a state of low mood that can affect a person’s thoughts, feelings, behaviour and sense of well-being (Salmans, 1997; DSM-5 APA, 2013). In modern society depression is becoming a very important issue. During the normal course of life depression is one of the most common psychological

conditions with so much of disappointments and losses (Srisailamaiah, Suresh & Reddy, 2016). Depressed people feel sad, anxious, empty, helpless, worthless, guilty, irritable, hurt or restless.

Well-being is a pleased state of being happy, healthy and prosperous (Townsend, 2002). Well-being is a lively concept that includes health-related behaviours as well as subjective, psychological and social dimensions (Tricia, 2005). Psychological well-being is a combination of positive affective states such as happiness and functioning with optimal effectiveness in individual and social life (Deci & Ryan, 2008). According to Huppert (2009) psychological well-being is a combination of feeling good and functioning effectively. Psychological well-being comprises of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. Adolescents who display strength in each of these areas will be in a state of good psychological well-being, while adolescents who struggle in these areas will be in a state of low psychological well-being (Rathi & Rastogi, 2007).

A person's life becomes beautiful with a different set of relations, but the sibling relation holds the key of all as they spend most of their time together. Siblings spend 80-100% of their lives together, at times marriages end in divorce and family may dissolve, but siblings are almost always kept together (Bank & Khan, 1982). The relationship between siblings is exceedingly formative, through their interactions in play, touch and fight, brothers and sisters' search for an identity and understanding of world (Packman et al., 2006). Around 2 million adolescents lose a sibling through death each year (Hogan & DeSantis, 1996). The death of a loved one has a considerable emotional consequences on normally functioning adults, but the effects are usually more evident in adolescents, as coping with death and sorrow is not a normative life transition for an adolescent (Balk, 1996). People usually fail to understand the extent to which surviving sibling is suffering, instead they care for their parents and ask survivors to be strong for their parents (Devita-Raeburn, 2004). Research revealed that, sibling bereavement may manifest in numerous negative symptoms like psychological, behavioural and physiological effects as a result of their grief (Birenbaum, 1999; Worden, Davies & McCown, 1998). Mourning in early adolescence is characterized by school refusal, persistent depression, initiation of drugs or alcohol use, as their behaviour may become oppositional, argumentative and demanding (Christ, Siegel & Christ, 2002). Several studies support the harmful effect of sibling bereavement on physiological well-being of adolescents (Birenbaum, 1999; Crehan, 2004; Davies, 1999; Fanos & Nickerson, 1991; Martinson & Campos, 1991; Rosen, 1986; Webb, 2002). Adolescents who lost their siblings have reportedly displayed symptoms like depression, anxiety, sadness, fear, hopelessness, rejection, anger, self-doubt and inferiority, fear of failure, isolation, worry, and self-blame (Birenbaum, 1999; Davies, 1999; Martinson & Campos, 1991). Similarly as per Balk (1983, 1990) symptoms of shock, depression, fear, loneliness, numbness, avoidance, and anger follow the death of a sibling. Researchers like Hogan (1987) revealed that adolescents who lost their siblings may suffer from difficult psychological reactions like feelings of powerlessness and helplessness, poor concentration, restlessness, fear of the dark, fear if intimacy, wishing for death, phobias, nightmares, low self-esteem, feeling uncomfortable when happy, feeling lonely, increased grief when alone, believing that one's parents will never get over death. Adolescents who had been bereaved of a sibling had a mean self-report of depressive symptoms 21.9 compared to 14.8 among those not bereaved of a sibling (Harrison & Harrington, 2001).

## II.OBJECTIVES

Keeping the need and purpose in mind the following research objectives were formulated:

- I. To study the relationship of depression and psychological well-being among adolescents who lost their siblings to the Kashmir conflict.
- II. To study depression as determinant of psychological well-being among adolescents who lost their siblings to the Kashmir conflict.
- III. To compare depression and psychological well-being among adolescents who lost their siblings to the Kashmir conflict with respect to gender.

## III.METHODOLOGY

### Tools:

The following tools were used. Their reliability, validity and objectivity mentioned in their respective manuals were considered as criteria.

I. **Beck's Depression Inventory (2nd edition):** The Scale (BDI-II) was developed by Beck, Steer and Brown (1996). It is a 21-item self report instrument for measuring the severity of depression. The BDI-II is scored by summing the ratings for 21 items and each item is rated on a 4-point scale ranging from 0 to 3.

II. **Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scale (Ryff, 1995):** This scale is adopted to measure the psychological wellbeing of respondents. It consists of 18 items which measure six dimensions of psychological wellbeing (Autonomy, Environmental mastery, Personal growth, Positive relations, Purpose in life, Self-acceptance) and each item is scored using a six-point scale.

## IV.RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

After collecting data, the scoring of the obtained data was done according to the manuals. Relevant statistical tests like correlation analysis, regression analysis and t-test were applied.

**Table 1: Correlation between Depression and psychological well-being**

Variable	Psychological well-being	Sig
Depression	-.677**	0.01

As per the above table, Depression and psychological well-being have significant negative correlation (-.677\*\*).

**Table 2: Showing multiple regression analysis of depression and psychological well-being.***Multiple regression analysis (ANOVA summary)*

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4063.492	1	4063.492	40.663	0.001
Residual	4796.688	48	99.931		
Total	8860.180	49			

*Multiple regression analysis (summary of predictor variables)*

outcome	predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Psychological wellbeing	Constant	96.773	3.635		26.624	.001
	depression	-1.132	.178	-.677	-6.377	.001

 $R^2=.459$ 

The above table revealed that 45% of variance in psychological wellbeing can be attributed to depression. ( $R^2=.459$ ,  $P \leq 0.001$ ).

**Table 3: Mean difference in Depression and psychological well-being in adolescents with respect to gender.**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	T value
PW	Male	25	82.00	7.18	48	3.940
	Female	25	68.84	15.07		
Depression	Male	25	15.68	6.30	48	3.018
	Female	25	22.04	8.43		

**\*\* $P \leq 0.01$  level**

The above table indicates that the t-value of psychological well-being ( $t=3.940$ ) and depression ( $t=3.018$ ) are significant at 0.001 level. Comparison of means reveals that boys have more psychological wellbeing ( $M=82.00$ ,  $S.D=7.18$ ) as compared to girls ( $M=68.84$ ,  $S.D=15.07$ ). As for as depression is considered, comparison of mean reveals that girls have more depression ( $M=22.04$ ,  $S.D=8.43$ ) than boys ( $M=15.68$ ,  $S.D=6.30$ ).

## V.DISCUSSION

The present study attempted to investigate depression and psychological well-being among the adolescents who lost their siblings to the Kashmir conflict. The results of this study showed that there is a significant negative correlation between depression and psychological well being. The regression analysis revealed that 45% of variance in psychological wellbeing can be attributed to depression. The study further revealed significant difference between adolescent boys and girls in terms of both psychological well-being and depression. Adolescent boys have more psychological well-being as compared to girls. The result is in line with Shaheen, jahan and shaheen, 2014, Dadhania, 2015, Desovsky, Abdellatif and Salah, 2015; Gelban, 2009; Mundy et al., 2013 Thus there it is needed to develop effective strategies to promote psychological well-being and to treat depression among adolescents, especially the adolescents of Kashmir valley who lost their siblings to the conflict.

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