

**DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, AND STRESS AMONG THE TEACHERS OF
PRIVATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES .A CROSS SECTIONAL
SECTIONAL STUDY FROM KARACHI**

Huzaifa Ather Rajar¹ & Faryal Shoukat²

Ziauddin College of Rehabilitation Sciences, Ziauddin University, Karachi, Pakistan.

Institute Address: 4/B Shahrah-e-Ghalib Rd, Block 6 Clifton, Karachi, Karachi City, Sindh

ABSTRACT

Teaching has been classified as a career with a high level of stress. New developments, such as the increased use of technology and the diversification of teaching roles, may exacerbate the already high levels of stress being experienced by educators. The purpose of this research is to ascertain the incidence of mental distress in the form of depression, anxiety, and stress among faculty members of private medical colleges in Karachi, Pakistan. A total of 136 educators from private sector medical colleges in Karachi were selected to participate in the research. To assess psychological distress caused by depression, anxiety, and stress, the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS) were used. Teachers exhibited a significant incidence of depression symptoms (78.6 percent), anxiety symptoms (87.6 percent), and stress symptoms (64 percent). While 23.5 percent, 46.2 percent, and 36.7 percent of respondents, respectively, experienced severe to extremely severe depression, anxiety, and stress. Depression, anxiety, as well as stress have all been prevalent among university instructors. Proper measures need to be made to enhance teachers' mental stability, hence assuring high-quality education.

Keywords: Depression, anxiety, and stress.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a term that refers to an environmental stimulus that affects people and can cause them to have physical and psychological responses.¹ Teaching is a physically and mentally demanding profession, as the teacher expends a great deal of energy on a daily basis in the classroom, in addition to his or her personal and household responsibilities, all of which contribute to a constant source of stress.² According to previous research, teaching is one of the most stressful careers, and educators have a greater rate of physical and mental symptoms than other occupations.³ Teachers experience occupational stress as a result of their job responsibilities, which include preparing lessons, organizing activities, developing curriculums, managing extracurricular activities, monitoring classrooms, providing information, maintaining discipline, covering for teacher shortages and absences, keeping records, administering timetables, analyzing and assessing students' performance, and motivating students through words and actions.⁴ Stress also causes negative feelings such as despair and anxiety, which impede the capacity of the teacher to perform at work or cope with everyday life.⁵

Anxiety is characterized by anxious feelings, pressure, and physiological problems such as higher blood pressure and heart rate, among other things. Individuals who suffer from anxiety disorders frequently have irrational thoughts or worries. They may also have bodily symptoms such as trembling, headache, shaking, or a fast heartbeat.⁶ Increased pressure from academic institutions, students, and parents, community attitudes, job overload, students' disobedience, and role conflict leave instructors perplexed, predisposing them to anxiety.⁷ Furthermore, the workload and the negative psychological environment at work are important predictors of depression among them.⁵

According to WHO statistics, approximately 264 million people worldwide suffer from various forms of depression. Depression may cause a person to suffer and disrupt his performance at job, university, and in the family. Depression's most significant side effect is that it might lead to suicide. Various Pakistani scholars have undertaken similar studies. Anxiety and depression were found to be present in 27.4% of the general population in a community-based cross-sectional study in Karachi.⁷

An Ethiopian study found that 22.9 percent of 354 Jimma University staff members had depression, 19.2 percent had anxiety, and 28.2 percent experienced stress.⁸ The goal of this study was to see how common depression, anxiety, and stress were among teachers at private medical universities. Additionally, the teaching profession has experienced significant expansion in recent years, including increased use of information technology, globalization, and privatization, all of which may contribute to the stress in teachers.

METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional investigation was undertaken in Karachi's private medical universities. The participants had to be a permanent teacher who had been teaching at the university for at least one year before the study to be eligible. A sample size of 136 individuals was determined using open epi software. The technique of non-probability purposive sampling was utilized in this investigation. The statistical analysis of the collected data was carried out using the SPSS version 20 software. Descriptive data was presented in the form of frequencies and percentages. In this study, the DASS (Depression Anxiety Stress Scales) was used to assess psychological discomfort. Depression, anxiety, and stress was measured using a 21-item, 4-point Likert scale, which has four possible responses. 0 (did not apply to me at all) through 3 (did apply to me completely) are the

response options for each item on the list. The severity rating was allocated to one of four categories: normal, mild to moderate, severe, or extremely severe, based on the total score for each subscale. The scale requires no specific training and is appropriate for use in non-clinical settings.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

All participants were provided informed consent forms prior to data collection to guarantee their voluntary involvement in the study. Following that, questionnaire responses were collected and examined for outcomes. Prior to initiating data collection, ethical considerations were made via verbal and written agreement from the individuals. Under the investigator's supervision, all participants' information was kept anonymous.

RESULTS

Out of 136 teachers, 74 (54.4%) were males and 62 (45.6%) were females. The intensity of psychological distress reported by the individuals is described in Table 2. Depressive symptoms were reported by 78.6 percent of instructors. 55.1 percent of the instructors were suffering from mild to moderate depression. About 23.5 percent of the instructors were suffering from severe-extremely severe depression. Anxiety symptoms were reported by 87.6 percent of instructors, with 41.2 percent reporting mild to moderate symptoms and 46.4 percent reporting severe to extremely severe symptoms. 64.6 percent of instructors reported having stress symptoms, with 27.9 percent falling into the mild to moderate group. The remaining 36.7 percent of instructors were classified as severe to extremely severe.

Table 1: Demographic Data

	All subjects %
Gender	
Male	74 (54.4%)
Female	62 (45.6%)
Age	
20-29	63 (46.3%)
30-39	44 (32.3%)
40-49	17 (12.5%)
>50	12 (8.8%)
Experience	
0-5	105 (77.2%)
5-10	23 (16.9%)
>10	8 (5.9%)
Distance	
>20	128 (94.1%)
>20	8 (5.9%)
Transportation	
Car	80 (58.8%)
Bike	32 (23.5%)
Public	24 (17.6%)
House	
Own home	104 (76.5)
	32 (23.5)

Rent	
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Table 2: Intensity of Psychological Distress

Level of Variables	Stress	Anxiety	Depression
Normal	48 (35.3%)	17 (12.5%)	29 (21.3%)
Mild	26 (19.1%)	13 (9.6%)	29 (21.3%)
Moderate	12 (8.8%)	43 (31.6%)	46 (33.8%)
Severe	35 (25.7%)	33 (24.3%)	12 (8.8%)
Extremely severe	15 (11%)	30 (22.1%)	20 (14.7%)

DISCUSSION

Teachers were reported to have a significant incidence of depression (78.6 percent), anxiety (87.6 percent), and stress (64.6 percent) symptoms in this study. While 23.5 percent, 46.4 percent, and 36.7 percent of respondents, respectively, experienced severe to extremely severe depression, anxiety, and stress. This was similar to a research conducted in Kota Bharu, which found that 34% of high school teachers felt stressed.⁹ Regarding depression, the incidence of 78.6% was comparable to a previous study that employed Depression Anxiety Stress Scales 21 to screen secondary school teachers in Kota Bharu, where the frequency was 49.1%, with the most of respondents suffering from mild depression.¹⁰

Psychological discomfort is harmful to one's health. Musculoskeletal discomfort was common among teachers, and it was linked to severe to extremely severe sadness and anxiety.¹¹

Furthermore, new researches emphasize the significance of teachers' mental health. Teachers' depression symptoms were shown to be inversely related to the quality of the classroom-learning environment (CLE).¹²

CONCLUSIONS

A high frequency of depression, anxiety, and stress was seen in academics at a private university. It is necessary to take appropriate steps to enhance the psychological health of teachers in order to provide high-quality education. During their training course, they may incorporate stress management approaches, such as spiritual coping mechanisms, into their teaching module to benefit their students.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest

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