



A study of depression, anxiety and stress among employed and unemployed people

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Abstract

In this progressing world people are moving very fast, they are after some or the other target to accomplish. But in this progressing world there are also people whose lives have halted due to unemployed. They are waiting for an opportunity to resume their lives from the halt that they are facing. In this fast growing world, people whether employed and unemployed are facing many problems in life whether it is financial, personal or psychological. As India is still a developing country, here the percentage of unemployment is more than employment, so they face more problems in their lives. Thus, the comparative study was conducted to see the level of depression, anxiety and stress among employed and unemployed people of Aligarh, India.

For the present study DASS scale was used which was developed by Lovibond & Lovibond (1995). It is a 42 item questionnaire which includes 3 self-scale designs to measure the negative emotional state of depression, anxiety and stress. The results indicate that employed people scored more on stress whereas unemployed people scored more on depression and anxiety.

Keywords: depression, anxiety, stress, employed

Introduction

The paradox of current times is that we the people fall prey to the pains of anxiety, stress or depression in search for employment while we are unemployed, and after getting employment fall further deep into anxiety or stress or depression trying to get out of that job to relieve ourselves of the stress that comes with the job secured.

Anxiety, stress and depression have tied us into their shackles irrespective of whether we are employed or unemployed. Both the situations get under our nerves in their own peculiar ways. These are the times when we come across news of unemployment rates going further north, some due to the economic conditions, and others due to external factors like H1 visas in USA not being renewed causing a lot of Indian workers to come back, hence increasing the count of jobless people here.

Needless to say, unemployment comes with its own package of troubles and exposes the jobless people to a lot of stress and ultimately anxiety or depression issues. It ranges from self-moral being injured and goes on to trouble of maintaining one's family and meeting with their needs.

Employment on the other hand has its own set of factors that render people under stress and hence becoming a patient of anxiety or depression. These could be the huge work load or the never ending demands of the employer that befall the employees. All such issues turn the employees tired and stressed all the time with minimal peace of mind.

Rates of severe anxiety and depression among unemployed people have soared by more than 50% in the last four years as the impact of "harsh" austerity policies take their toll, as this has been revealed by The Independent. New analysis of data from NHS surveys of GP patients shows that in March 2017,

15.2% of unemployed people said that they suffered from severe or extreme anxiety or depression.

According to International Labour Organization report, more than 200 million people globally or 6% of the world's workforce were without a job in 2012.

"it is in the very nature of the capitalist mode of production to overwork some workers while keeping the rest as a reserve army of unemployed paupers." Marx, Theory of Surplus Value.

A 2015 study published in The Lancet estimates that unemployment causes 45,000 suicides a year globally.

Many studies have been conducted on the employed and unemployed people around the globe to see the level of depression, anxiety or stress among them, and many related studies have also been conducted on the same.

M.W. Linn, R. Sandifer and S. Stein in May 1985, came to the result after a prospective study performed by comparing the impact of stress on unemployed people as against that on the employed people, it was found that the level of somatization, depression and anxiety was higher in the unemployed people as compared to the employed ones, though large standard deviation in self-esteem scores in unemployed people showed that some of them coped better than the rest of them.

Poornima Mahindru, Manoj Kumar Sharma, and Santosh Kumar Chaturvedi, 2016 conducted an extremely high level of stress related to psychiatric symptoms were founds in the employees in the corporate sector. To append to the problem, this sector seems to have no proper medical facilities to deal with the issue and due to lack of collaboration of this sector, the mental health professional's fall into dilemmas in evaluating and treating the affected employees.

Sheldon Rao and Naveen Ramesh, 2015 conducted a cross-

sectional study performed among workmen of a firm. The study involved the use of a socio-demographic questionnaires and a mental health screening tool-DASS-21. Based on the study it was concluded that none of the workers had a positive score for depression. Around 36% had a positive score for anxiety and 18% had a positive score for stress on DASS-21 scale.

Depression is very common disorder in people. Symptoms of depression can affect day to day life and can become very distressing. With depression, individuals have a low mood and other symptoms each day for at least two weeks. Symptoms can also become severe enough to interfere with normal day to day activities. According to Salmans,1977 “ Depression is a state of low mood and aversion that can have negative effect on person’s thought, behavior, feelings, world view and physical well-being.” Depression is a common mental disorder that presents with depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feeling of guilt, low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy, and poor concentration.

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure. People with anxiety disorder usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situations out of worry. They may also have physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, dizziness or a rapid heartbeat. Anxiety is a general term for several disorders that cause nervousness, fear, apprehension, and worrying. These disorders affect how we feel and behave and they can manifest real physical symptoms. Anxiety is considered a problem when symptoms interfere with a person’s ability to sleep or otherwise function.

Spielberger (1983) defines anxiety as-“The subjective feelings of tension, apprehension and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system.” [Spielberger, 1983:1, cited in Brown, 2007].

A major United States survey by the National Institute of Mental Health (Regier *et al.*, 1984) showed that anxiety disorders are more common in the general population than are any other disorders, including depression.

The term stress was borrowed from the field of physics by one of the father’s of stress research Hans Selye. The physical stress describes the force that produce strain on a physical body (i.e., bending a piece of metal until it snaps occurs because of the force or stress, exerted on it.). Hans Selye began using the term stress after completing his medical training at the University of Montreal in the 1920’s. He noticed that no matter what his hospitalized patients suffered from, they all had one common thing in them. They all looked sick. In his view, they all were under physical stress. He proposed that stress was a non-specific strains on the body caused by irregularities in normal body functions. This stress resulted in the release of stress hormones. He called this General Adaptive Syndrome (GAS).

The term stress has been used to refer both to the adjustive demands placed on the organisms and to the organism’s internal, biological and psychological responses to such demands. To avoid confusions adjustive demands are referred as Stressors to the effects they create within an organism as stress. The effort to deal with the stress is called as coping strategies. It is very important to remember that stress and

coping strategies are inter-related and dependent on each other. All situations positive or negative that require adjustment can be stressful. Thus, according to physiologist, Hans Selye, the notion of stress can be broken down further into Eustress and Distress. Both the types of stress demand a person’s resources and coping skills, however distress has more potential to damage the organism. Stress is the outcome of strain.

Significance of the study

The present study was conducted to explore the differences between employed and unemployed people on depression, anxiety and stress.

Objectives

1. To examine the difference between the mean scores of employed and unemployed peoples on depression.
2. To examine the difference between the mean scores of employed and unemployed peoples on anxiety.
3. To examine the difference between the mean scores of employed and unemployed peoples on stress.

Hypothesis

1. There will be no difference between employed and unemployed people on depression.
2. There will be no difference between employed and unemployed people on anxiety.
3. There will be no difference between employed and unemployed people on stress.

Methodology

Sample

Sample of 80 people (40 employed people, 40 unemployed people) were taken for conducting the study.

Tool

DASS Scale has been used for the study. The DASS scale was developed by Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995 is a 42 item questionnaire which includes 3 self-scale design to measure the negative emotional state of depression, anxiety and stress. Each of the 3 scales contains 14 items, that is 14 items represents depression, 14 items represents anxiety, 14 items represents stress. There are 4 point rating scale from did not apply to me, to applied very much, most of the time.

Procedure

All the subjects were approached personally. Samples of employed people were taken from Aligarh Muslim University and it was bit difficult to find unemployed people because people hide that they are unemployed to avoid the embarrassment. Before the conduction of the research good and comfortable rapport was formed between the participant and the investigator. The participants were made comfortable and was explained the purpose of the research. The participants were also made very clear that the answers given by them will strictly be used for this particular research and will be kept confidential. The identities of the participants will be kept confidential and they were informed about it. In the presence of the investigator the participants were made to fill in the DASS inventory. Any queries by the participants about

the inventory or about the research was made clear to them. After they have completed the filling up of inventory the participants were thanked for their participation.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by the means of t-test. T-test was used to examine difference between the mean scores of employed and unemployed people on depression, anxiety and stress emotional states.

Result

Table 1: Indicating the differences between mean scores of employed and unemployed people on depression.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-score
Employed people	40	6.67	5.47	7.90
Unemployed people	40	19.40	8.69	

Table 1, shows that the unemployed people scored significantly higher on depression than employed people.

Table 2: Indicating the differences between mean scores of employed and unemployed people on anxiety.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-score
Employed people	40	9.80	5.3	4.07
Unemployed people	40	20.65	16	

Table 2, shows that unemployed people scored significantly higher on anxiety than employed people.

Table 3: Indicating the differences between mean scores of employed and unemployed people on stress.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-score
Employed people	40	22.85	9.46	5.72
Unemployed people	40	12.20	7.11	

Table 3, shows that employed people scored significantly higher on stress than unemployed people.

Discussion

The aim of the study was to examine differences between the mean scores of employed and unemployed people on depression, anxiety and stress. And after the conduction of the study all the three hypotheses were rejected. The results suggests that employed people scored more on stress whereas unemployed people scored more on depression and anxiety.

Limitations

1. People who were permanently employed were not included for the research purpose.
2. No particular age group was specified because people working on fixed salary and daily wages do not fall under the same age group.
3. Females were not included for the research purpose.

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