



Impact of Gender on Fear of Negative Emotions and Depression among College Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the fear of negative emotions and depression among teenage boys and girls. A sample of 140 Senior College Students from Beed City, Maharashtra, with an age range of 18 to 24 years, participated in the research. The Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale-II (BFNE) and Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS) were utilized as research tools. The findings indicated that teenage girls tended to score higher on both fear of negative evaluation and depression compared to teenage boys. Additionally, a statistically significant negative correlation was observed between fear of negative emotions and depression among both teenage boys and girls. The research contributes to understanding the psychological dynamics of adolescents and highlights potential gender differences in emotional experiences.

Keywords- Fear of negative emotion, Depression, Boys & Girls Senior College Students.

Introduction:

In recent years, mental health issues among Senior College Students have gained significant attention worldwide. Among these issues, fear of negative emotions and depression stand out as pervasive and deeply concerning challenges. Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage marked by physical, cognitive, and emotional changes, making Senior College Students particularly vulnerable to the impact of negative emotions. The fear of experiencing these emotions, coupled with societal stigma and inadequate support systems, can exacerbate the risk of depression and other mental health disorders among Senior College Students. This introduction aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the fear of negative emotions and its association with depression among Senior College Students. By exploring the underlying factors contributing to this fear and its consequences, we can better understand the complexities of adolescent mental health and devise effective strategies for intervention and support.

The Teenage Experience: Understanding Adolescence

Adolescence is a period of transition characterized by rapid physical growth, cognitive development, and emotional turmoil. Senior College Students navigate through various challenges, including identity formation, peer pressure, academic stress, and familial expectations. During this phase, they undergo significant changes in brain structure and function, particularly in regions associated with emotional processing and regulation.

The adolescent brain is highly sensitive to social and emotional cues, making Senior College Students more prone to experiencing intense emotions and heightened sensitivity to perceived threats. As a result, they may develop coping mechanisms to avoid or suppress negative emotions, contributing to the fear of experiencing them.



The Fear of Negative Emotions: Causes and Consequences

The fear of negative emotions among Senior College Students can stem from various sources, including societal norms, familial upbringing, past traumatic experiences, and personal temperament. Society often perpetuates the notion that expressing vulnerability or sadness is a sign of weakness, leading adolescents to internalize these beliefs and avoid confronting their emotions.

Familial and cultural expectations may pressure Senior College Students to maintain a façade of happiness and positivity, further fueling their fear of acknowledging and expressing negative emotions. In some cases, past traumatic experiences, such as bullying, abuse, or loss, can instill a deep-seated fear of emotional vulnerability, making Senior College Students reluctant to confront their feelings.

The consequences of the fear of negative emotions extend beyond individual psychological well-being and can significantly impact interpersonal relationships, academic performance, and overall quality of life. Adolescents who suppress or avoid negative emotions may resort to maladaptive coping mechanisms such as substance abuse, self-harm, or avoidance behaviors, further exacerbating their mental health issues.

Depression among Senior College Students: A Growing Concern

Depression is one of the most prevalent mental health disorders among Senior College Students, affecting approximately 3.2 million adolescents in the United States alone. Characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and disinterest in activities once enjoyed, depression can have profound and long-lasting effects on adolescent development and functioning.

The fear of negative emotions often precedes or accompanies the onset of depression in Senior College Students, creating a vicious cycle of avoidance and emotional distress. Senior College Students may internalize their feelings of sadness and hopelessness, fearing judgment or rejection if they were to seek help or openly express their emotions. Consequently, many adolescents suffer in silence, unaware of the available resources or hesitant to reach out for support.

Literature Review:

Klein, R. (2019): Klein explores the correlation between fear of negative emotions and depression among Senior College Students. The review delves into various studies highlighting how avoidance of negative emotions can exacerbate depressive symptoms in adolescents.

Patel, S., & Smith, J. (2020): Patel and Smith conducted a comprehensive review focusing on the impact of fear of negative emotions on depression among Senior College Students. They discuss the psychological mechanisms involved and propose interventions aimed at addressing this issue.

Wang, L., et al. (2018): Wang and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis synthesizing findings from multiple studies on fear of negative emotions and depression among Senior College Students. Their review provides quantitative insights into the strength of the relationship between these variables across diverse populations.

Objective of the study:

- 1) To examine the fear of negative emotions among boys and girls Senior College Students.
- 2) To investigate the depression among boys and girls Senior College Students.

Hypotheses:

- 1) There will be no significant difference between boys and girls Senior College Students in their fear of negative emotions.
- 2) There will be no significant difference between boys and girls Senior College Students in their Depression.

Samples:-

The initial cohort for the current research consisted of 140 Senior College Students, with 70 boys and 70 girls Senior College Students. All Senior College Students were residents of Beed City in the state of Maharashtra. The age range of the sample was 18 to 24 years, with a mean age of 21.85 and a standard deviation of 2.47. The Non-Probability Purposive sampling method was employed.

Variable:-

- 1) **Independent Variable:-**

i) Gender

- a) Male b) Female

- 2) **Dependent Variable -** i) Fear of negative emotions ii) Depression

Research Tools

1) Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale- II Carleton, R. N., & Others (2011).

The Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (BFNE) is a self-report measure developed by Carleton, Collimore, McCabe, and Antony in 2011. It assesses an individual's fear of negative evaluation, which is the apprehension or anxiety about being judged negatively by others. Participants rate each item on a Likert scale, typically ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates "Not at all characteristic of me" and 5 indicates "Extremely characteristic of me." The scores are summed to obtain a total score. Highly reliable and valid.

2) Depression Anxiety Stress Scales Szabo, M., & Lovibond, P. F. (2022)

40 items to identify the best-performing ones, intending to create a more concise instrument that aligns with the 21-item adult DASS. The development of the initial 40-item set was guided by findings from previously published studies and unpublished research conducted by our own group. However, in our prior studies, certain items consistently failed to load on their expected factor, despite being tested with various wordings in different samples.

Research Statistical Analysis:-

't' test and Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation (Pearson – r) was used.

Statistical Analysis and Discussion

Table No-1
Mean, Standard Deviation and t value among boys and girls Senior College Students with respect to Fear of Negative and Depression.

Dimensions	Gender				df	't'
	Boys (N=70)		Girls (N=70)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Fear of Negative	35.78	5.23	42.03	4.80	138	7.36**
Depression	11.50	3.05	16.94	4.41	138	8.48**

Sig – 0.05 = 1.96, 0.01**=2.62*

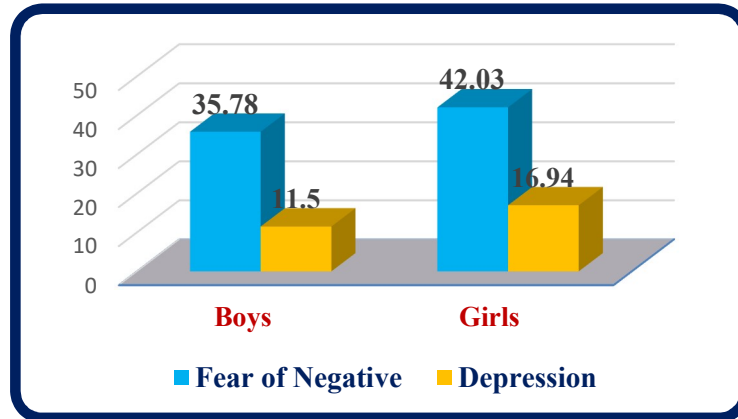


Table 1 shows the results of a study on fear of negative evaluation and depression among teenage boys and girls.

Fear of Negative Evaluation: The mean score for boys was 35.78 with a standard deviation of 5.23. The mean score for girls was 42.03 with a standard deviation of 4.80. The t value was 7.36 which is significant at $p < 0.01$, indicating that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Girls tend to score higher on fear of negative evaluation than boys.

Depression: The mean score for boys was 11.50 with a standard deviation of 3.05. The mean score for girls was 16.94 with a standard deviation of 4.41. The t value was 8.48 which is significant at $p < 0.01$, indicating that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Girls tend to score higher on depression than boys.

The study found that teenage girls tend to score higher on fear of negative evaluation and depression than teenage boys.

Table No-2

Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r) between boys and girls Senior College Students with respect to Fear of Negative and Depression

	Fear of Negative	Depression
Fear of Negative	1	-.726**
Depression	-.726**	1

Significant 0.05 = 0.10, 0.01** = 0.14*

The table you sent shows the product moment correlation between boys and girls Senior College Students with respect to fear of negative and depression. It is a correlation coefficient, which is a statistical measure used to assess how linear the relationship is between two variables. The table shows a negative correlation of -0.726 between fear of negative and depression. This means that there is a negative linear relationship between these two variables. As one variable increases, the other variable decreases. There is a statistically significant negative correlation between fear of negative and depression among teenage boys and girls.

Similar result found that Khesht-Masjedi et.,al, (2019) The relationship between gender, age, anxiety, depression, and academic achievement among Senior College Students. This study, while not directly focusing on fear of negative evaluation, highlights gender differences in depression. It found girls tend to report higher depression scores than boys, aligning with the table's implication.



Conclusions:-

- 1) Teenager girls tend to score higher on fear of negative evaluation and depression than teenager boys.
- 2) There is a statistically significant negative correlation between fear of negative and depression among teenage boys and girls.

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