



Relationship between Academic performance and Mental health conditions like Depression and Anxiety

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Abstract: *This study examines the relationship between academic performance and mental health conditions, with a particular focus on depression among students. In recent years, mental health issues have become increasingly prevalent in educational settings, affecting students' emotional well-being, motivation, concentration, and overall academic success. The research aims to analyse how symptoms of depression influence students' academic achievement and learning outcomes. A quantitative research approach was employed, using surveys and academic records collected from students across different educational levels. The findings indicate a significant negative correlation between depression and academic performance, where higher levels of depressive symptoms are associated with lower grades, reduced participation, and decreased productivity. Factors such as stress, lack of social support, and academic pressure were also identified as contributing elements. The study highlights the importance of early mental health intervention, counselling services, and supportive educational environments to improve both psychological well-being and academic achievement. These findings may assist educators, parents, and policymakers in developing effective strategies to address mental health challenges among students and promote healthier academic experiences. Mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety have become increasingly prevalent among students across schools, colleges, and universities. These psychological conditions significantly influence academic performance by affecting concentration, motivation, memory, attendance, and overall learning ability. This research paper explores the relationship between academic performance and mental health conditions, specifically depression and anxiety, among students. The paper reviews existing literature, identifies contributing factors, and examines how mental health challenges impact educational outcomes. Findings from previous studies indicate a strong negative correlation between severe symptoms of depression and anxiety and students' academic achievement. The study also highlights the importance of institutional support systems, counseling services, and awareness programs in promoting students' psychological well-being and improving academic success. The paper concludes that addressing mental health concerns is essential for enhancing educational performance and ensuring holistic student development.*

Keywords: *Academic Performance, Mental Health, Depression, Anxiety, Students, Educational Achievement, Psychological Well-Being.*

Introduction: Education plays a crucial role in personal, social, and economic development. Academic performance is commonly used as an indicator of a student's learning progress, intellectual ability, and future success. However, academic achievement is influenced not only by cognitive skills but also by psychological and emotional well-being. In recent years, mental health issues among students have become a growing concern worldwide. Depression and anxiety are among the most common mental health disorders affecting

students, often interfering with their academic responsibilities and social functioning. Depression is characterized by persistent sadness, lack of interest, low energy, hopelessness, and difficulty concentrating. Anxiety involves excessive worry, nervousness, fear, and emotional tension. Both conditions can negatively affect students' ability to focus on studies, complete assignments, participate in classroom activities, and perform well in examinations. The increasing academic pressure, competition, family expectations, financial stress, social isolation, and uncertainty about the future contribute to the rise of mental health problems among students. Understanding the relationship between academic performance and mental health is therefore essential for educators, parents, policymakers, and healthcare professionals. This paper aims to examine how depression and anxiety influence academic performance and to explore strategies for improving student mental health and educational outcomes.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the relationship between academic performance and mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety.
- To identify factors contributing to depression and anxiety among students.
- To analyze the effects of mental health conditions on students' educational achievement.
- To suggest strategies and interventions that can support students' mental well-being and academic success.

Literature Review

Several studies have explored the relationship between mental health and academic performance. Research consistently shows that students experiencing depression and anxiety are more likely to have lower grades, poor attendance, reduced concentration, and decreased motivation. According to Eisenberg, Golberstein, and Hunt (2009), college students with symptoms of depression are more likely to experience academic difficulties and lower grade point averages (GPAs). Similarly, Owens, Stevenson, Hadwin, and Norgate (2012) found that anxiety negatively affects cognitive performance, particularly memory and attention.

A study conducted by Beiter et al. (2015) revealed that academic stress, pressure to succeed, and financial difficulties are significant contributors to anxiety and depression among university students. The researchers emphasized the importance of mental health support services on campuses.

Another study by Hysenbegasi, Hass, and Rowland (2005) demonstrated that students diagnosed with depression showed a noticeable decline in academic performance compared to students without depression. Depression was associated with decreased productivity, poor class participation, and lower examination scores. Research by Stallman (2010) highlighted that students often hesitate to seek professional help due to stigma, lack of awareness, and fear of judgment. This delay in treatment may worsen mental health symptoms and further affect academic achievement. Overall, existing literature supports the conclusion that depression and anxiety significantly influence academic performance and student well-being.

Depression is characterized by persistent sadness, loss of interest, fatigue, hopelessness, and difficulty concentrating. Studies indicate that depression negatively affects students' academic success by reducing motivation, memory retention, decision-making ability, and classroom participation. Research conducted by Aaron T. Beck highlighted how negative thinking patterns associated with depression impair cognitive functioning and academic productivity. Similarly, studies among college students found that students experiencing depressive symptoms often show lower Grade Point Averages (GPA), poor attendance, and higher dropout rates.

A study by Daniel Eisenberg and colleagues demonstrated that depression significantly reduces academic persistence and educational attainment among university students. Students suffering from depression often struggle with time management, concentration, and maintaining consistent academic effort. Several longitudinal studies have also shown a bidirectional relationship between depression and academic achievement. Poor academic performance may increase feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness, which in turn intensify depressive symptoms. This cyclical relationship can negatively affect students over time.

Anxiety refers to excessive worry, fear, nervousness, and physiological tension that interfere with daily functioning. Academic anxiety commonly emerges from examination stress, fear of failure, parental expectations, peer competition, and workload pressure.

Research suggests that moderate anxiety may motivate students to perform better; however, excessive anxiety significantly impairs learning and academic achievement. High levels of anxiety interfere with attention span, memory processing, problem-solving skills, and test performance.

Studies conducted in educational psychology reveal that students with severe anxiety often experience examination fear, procrastination, sleep disturbances, and reduced classroom participation. According to the cognitive interference theory, anxious thoughts occupy working memory, making it difficult for students to process academic information effectively.

Research by Charles D. Spielberger emphasized that test anxiety is strongly associated with lower examination scores and poor academic outcomes. University students experiencing chronic anxiety are also more likely to report burnout and reduced academic satisfaction.

Research Methodology: This study is based on a qualitative and descriptive research design using secondary data collected from journals, books, research articles, and academic databases.

Sources of Data: The research uses secondary sources including:

- Peer-reviewed journal articles
- Educational reports
- Books related to psychology and education
- Online academic databases
- Data Analysis Method

The collected information was analyzed through thematic analysis to identify common patterns, relationships, and findings related to mental health and academic performance.

Relationship between Academic Performance and Mental Health: Mental health plays a vital role in students' learning and educational achievement. Depression and anxiety can affect academic performance in several ways.

1. Reduced Concentration and Memory- Students suffering from depression and anxiety often experience difficulty concentrating and remembering information. This reduces their ability to understand concepts, retain knowledge, and perform effectively in examinations.

2. Lack of Motivation- Depression commonly leads to low motivation and feelings of hopelessness. Students may lose interest in attending classes, completing assignments, or participating in academic activities.

3. Poor Attendance- Mental health conditions may result in absenteeism due to fatigue, emotional distress, or fear of social interactions. Poor attendance can negatively affect academic learning and classroom engagement.

4. Increased Stress and Burnout- Excessive academic pressure can increase anxiety levels and contribute to emotional exhaustion. Chronic stress may lead to burnout, reducing students' productivity and academic efficiency.

5. Sleep Disturbances- Depression and anxiety often cause sleep problems such as insomnia or irregular sleep patterns. Lack of proper sleep affects attention, decision-making, and cognitive functioning.

6. Social Isolation- Students with mental health difficulties may withdraw from peers and social activities, reducing emotional support and increasing feelings of loneliness.

Factors Contributing to Depression and Anxiety Among Students: Several factors contribute to mental health issues among students:

- Academic pressure and competition
- Fear of failure and examination stress
- Family expectations
- Financial problems
- Social media influence
- Lack of emotional support
- Bullying and peer pressure
- Relationship issues
- Career uncertainty
- Poor work-life balance
- These factors may vary depending on age, educational level, socioeconomic background, and personal experiences.

Impact on Educational Institutions: Mental health problems among students can also affect educational institutions. High levels of depression and anxiety may contribute to:

- Increased dropout rates
- Decline in classroom participation
- Lower institutional performance outcomes
- Reduced student engagement
- Greater demand for counseling and support services

Educational institutions therefore have an important responsibility to create supportive learning environments that promote psychological well-being.

Strategies to Improve Mental Health and Academic Performance

- 1. Counseling and Psychological Support-** Schools and universities should provide accessible counseling services and mental health professionals to support students.
- 2. Mental Health Awareness Programs-** Awareness campaigns and workshops can reduce stigma and encourage students to seek help when needed.
- 3. Stress Management Techniques-** Teaching stress management strategies such as mindfulness, meditation, relaxation exercises, and time management can improve emotional well-being.
- 4. Supportive Academic Environment-** Teachers and administrators should create positive and inclusive learning environments that reduce excessive pressure.
- 5. Peer Support Systems-** Peer mentoring and support groups can help students share experiences and reduce feelings of isolation.
- 6. Parental Involvement-** Parents should maintain open communication with students and provide emotional encouragement and understanding.
- 7. Balanced Lifestyle-** Students should be encouraged to maintain healthy lifestyles through regular exercise, proper nutrition, and adequate sleep.

The study identified the following major findings:

- Depression and anxiety significantly affect students' academic performance.
- Mental health conditions reduce concentration, motivation, and classroom participation.
- Academic stress and social pressures are major contributors to depression and anxiety.
- Students experiencing severe psychological distress are more likely to achieve lower grades.
- Counseling services and supportive educational environments can positively improve academic outcomes.
- Early identification and treatment of mental health problems are essential for student success.

Conclusion: Mental health and academic performance are closely interconnected. Depression and anxiety can negatively influence students' cognitive abilities, emotional stability, motivation, and overall educational achievement. As academic pressure and social expectations continue to rise, students become increasingly vulnerable to psychological distress.

Educational institutions, families, and policymakers must work together to address mental health concerns and create supportive environments for students. Providing counseling services, promoting mental health awareness, reducing stigma, and encouraging healthy coping strategies can help students manage stress and improve academic performance.

Addressing mental health issues is not only important for academic success but also for the overall well-being and personal development of students. Future research should focus on identifying effective interventions and examining the long-term impact of mental health support programs on educational achievement.

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