

Study on the Prevalence, Patterns, and Determinants of Anxiety Disorders Among Adolescents in Secondary Schools in Jos, North Plateau State

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness worldwide affecting 301 million people. Adolescence is a critical period for emotional and psychological development making them more susceptible to mental illnesses including anxiety disorder and also making them prone to negligence.

Methodology: A multi-stage sampling technique was conducted with 270 participants between ages 13 to 19 who were administered a structured interviewer-administered questionnaire. Data was cleaned with Microsoft excel and analyzed using SPSS version 25.0 and was represented with tables and charts. Chi-square tests were used to assess the relationships between anxiety levels and determinants and also state statistical significance among categorical variables with level of significance taken at $p < 0.05$.

Results: The overall prevalence of significant anxiety disorder was 16%. The various patterns of anxiety disorder were assessed and panic disorder emerged the highest(36%). About 98% of participants had multiple anxiety disorder patterns with only 2% emerging with a single anxiety pattern. Academic stress and financial stress were found to be the highest determining factors of anxiety disorder among gender, age, family structure, bullying, safe environment, parental support and life events.

Conclusion: This study highlights the urgent need for proactive mental health intervention and policy adjustments in the educational sector to address the mental health challenges faced by adolescents.

