

A Study To Screen Panic Disorder Among Higher Secondary School Students



Medical Science

KEYWORDS : panic disorder, panic attack, mental health, students

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ABSTRACT

Panic disorder in school students limits the students in attending school and social activities. Panic attack may decrease the student's concentration on listening class. Aim: To screen for panic disorder among higher secondary school students. Method: Descriptive study done in 400 higher secondary students from two schools using SCARED scale child version and parent version. Results: Our study shows that 15% of the children have panic disorder. Prevalence in females is 16% and in males is 14% respectively. Conclusion: The prevalence of panic disorder among school children is higher in our study compared to the previous studies with prevalence being higher in females; prevalence of panic disorder is higher in our study compared to previous studies.

INTRODUCTION:

One of the most common psychiatric problems prevailing among adolescence in this era is the anxiety disorders (1). Adolescence is a peculiar period between a dependent child and an independent adult. They comprise of 15% of the total population in developed countries and 22.8% in India. Though many are affected, it is solely under diagnosed. This is because both the parents and the practitioners themselves ignore the early signs and symptoms and hence no appropriate treatment (2). These traits can continue through adulthood and may become permanent and difficult to treat. Early onset symptoms (<13 years) have more chronic and persisting course (3,4). The symptoms may appear subtle, but they can lead on to serious and chronic illness. Though the spectrum of anxiety disorders in adolescence varies, the critical part is it causes significant emotional stress among family members and also academic under achievement in the individual.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To screen for panic disorder among higher secondary school students using SCARED scale child version and parent version.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Descriptive study was done by Department of Paediatrics, Kilpauk Medical College Hospital, and Chennai in higher secondary students. Institutional Ethics committee approval, School Management permission to conduct the study in school premises and informed consent was obtained. 400 Higher secondary school students (11th standard) from 2 schools were recruited for the study. SCARED scale, Child version and Parent version questionnaire was used to assess 3 months situation. One to one interview was taken with students; parents were interviewed in teacher parent meeting individually.

RESULTS

400 higher secondary students from 2 schools were questioned, equal gender distribution in the ratio of 1:1. Analysis reveals that prevalence of panic disorder is 60 (15%) in child version. Distribution of panic disorder in gender, male 28 (14%), female 32 (16%). Parent version shown prevalence of panic disorder is 64 (16%) which is 1% higher than child version. There is increase of 1.5% male, 0.5% male compared with child version. Analysis of gender distribution as per child version of SCARED scale shows that panic disorder is more in females than males. It is 14% and 15.5% in male according to child and parent version and in female it is 16% (child version) and 16.5% (parent version).

Table 1 Distribution of study results in gender

	Panic disorder	
	Male	Female
Child Version	14%	16%
Parent Version	15.5%	16.5%

Analysis of gender distribution as per child version of SCARED scale shows that panic disorder is more in females than males. It is 14% in boys according to child and 15.5% according to parent version and in girls it is 16% (child version) and 16.5% (parent version).

DISCUSSION

Our study showed prevalence of panic disorder of 15% in child version and 16% in parent version whereas Jacinta B McCann showed prevalence of 23% while others showed ranges from 2.6% to 12%. Higher prevalence may be due to competitive exams and this panic attack makes them to worry about life threatening illness. As these disorders responds well to treatment like cognitive therapy, it is necessary to early diagnose and prevent complications.

Table 2 Comparison of Study results

STUDY	PANIC DISORDER
E Emerson et al	2.9 %
C Hayward et al	5.3 %
Biederman et al ⁽⁷⁾	6 %
Daniel J.Pilowsky et al	12 %
H U Wittachen et al	2.6 %
Jacinta B McCann	23 %
Our study	15 % (child version)
	16% (parent version)

CONCLUSION:

Our study showed higher prevalence of panic disorder in the study population. This study implies more studies are to be conducted like this study and children with anxiety disorders are to be identified at earlier stage and properly counselled and treated if necessary. This is the need of the hour and to improve both the academic and general outcome of children.

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