

The Effects of Anxiety and Depression on Women: Causes, Symptoms and Treatments

Dr. Sarvesh Kumari

Assistant Professor

Dept. of Education

A.K.P. (P.G) College, Hapur

Email: sarveshbhushan2@gmail.com

Abstract:

Depression is a serious and pervasive mood disorder. It causes feelings of sadness, hopelessness, helplessness, and worthlessness. Generally, mental health problems emerge as serious threats to the well-being of human society in both genders. These problems break up the peace of our mind and its stability cannot be under control. Nowadays, anxiety and its associated problems are among the most common psychiatric syndromes in all over the world. It is believed that this syndrome affects approximately 25 percent of the general population. Hence, the present study attempts to find out the major causes of depression under anxiety particularly for the women section because women are mostly having depression, which is affected by their anxiety. With the rapid growth of industrialization and modernization in the country, there is also a rapid increase in the rate of violence against women, which has directly or indirectly contributed to the rise of mental health problems. The most effective treatment is to maintain our healthy immune system through yoga, physical activities and positive thinking etc.

Keywords:

Anxiety, Depression, Symptoms, Yoga, Mental disorder, Positive thinking

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Dr. Sarvesh Kumari

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Introduction

In this universe human being is the most unique and complex organism and has many needs, demands and aspirations for his existence, all human action is goal-oriented. Unless man arranges his desires, needs and motives in some order, they may come to clashes and cause confusion and chaos in the social setting, which further may lead to anxiety and tension in their minds. Thus, their minds cannot be stable. Due to rapid Industrialization, urbanization and modernization, our human beings have become just like a machines. There is not enough time for mental relaxation. Everyone is hurried to make more and money without caring about their health. Sometimes; we have forgotten the dictum 'A sound body possesses a sound mind'. According to the world health organization (WHO), depression is the most common illness worldwide and the leading cause of disability. They estimate that 350 million people are affected by depression, globally. Depression due to anxiety is a common problem, which is closely associated with the present modern lifestyle. Anxiety heightened the state of unease worry or fear and millions of people in the world daily experience it.

Psychologists believe that one individual out of the three will experience an anxiety attack in the lifetime. Out of those anxiety experienced, 80 percent will continue to the anxiety experience on a regular basis.

Anxiety and Types of Anxiety

Anxiety can be considered as a signal of threat to psychological equilibrium. It is a disproportionate reaction to an apparently minor threat and it keeps in hidden inside the person's subjective inner world. Anxiety, the group of syndromes can be classified into several types such as:

1. **Normal anxiety:** An anxiety is called normal when its intensity and character are appropriate in a given situation, and when its effects are not disorganizing and maladaptive. It increases a person's readiness for prompt and vigorous action; and adds spice to pleasurable anticipation, root of laughter and enjoyment.
2. **Traumatic anxiety:** Anxiety can be called traumatic anxiety when it is the shock effect of traumatic experiences or a series of mild but erosive traumatic experiences- upon a person who feels helpless to protect himself because he lacks adequate defenses.
3. **Pathological anxiety:** Pathological anxiety represents tension that demands immediate diffuse discharge in hyperactivity, which is a regression to the infantile situation, or when it results in poorly controlled aggressive behavior, which disturbs interpersonal relationships.

4. **Situational anxiety:** Situational anxiety occurs when an individual feels anxious, when the individual faces certain situations where he finds himself problematic but as soon as the individual gets rid out of that situation and he no longer feels anxious.
5. **Character logical anxiety:** When anxiety becomes a component of the psychic makeup of the individual, in such instances, an individual will worry about things that have happened or else an individual experiences anxiety as a sense of nameless dread without being able to identify why or what the person is fearful of. This is called 'Free floating anxiety'.
6. **Conscious and Unconscious anxiety:** In conscious anxiety, the individual is conscious of what he is anxious about, here the cause is mostly known and the individual knows that he is anxious. While in unconscious anxiety, an individual experiences enduring spells of tension and restlessness without knowing what makes him so the manifestations of unconscious anxiety may be at a physiological level usually in the form of psychosomatic reactions.
7. **Anxiety neurosis:** In anxiety neurosis, the individual is not aware of his cause of anxiety, yet he imagines one in order to lead an air of rationality to his worry, acute anxiety and chronic anxiety are the part of anxiety neurosis.
8. **Anxiety hysteria:** In anxiety hysteria, the patient's cause of anxiety is abnormal, and he projects his own difficulties on the conditions outside himself. It is permanent, more intense and stronger than normal anxiety. It needs the help of a psychologist.

Anxiety and Depression

Anxiety and depression are closely related to one another and are both the product of phobia. The concept of phobia has been derived from the Greek word 'Phobos' which means the fear or dread. The simplest phobias occur twice the prevalence among women than men and they occur in the early years of life. Phobia may be of several types like agoraphobia, claustrophobia, hematophobia, ocholophobia, monophobia, acrophobia, thanoto phobia, nyctophobia, and pyrophobia that indicate the fear of open places, fear of closed places or rooms, fear of blood, fear of seeing crowd, fear of being alone, fear of height, fear of death, fear of darkness and fear of fire respectively. Panic disorder is another type of anxiety, which puts an individual in an unusual position. It is always sudden, overwhelming and often spreading quickly. The key symptoms of anxiety experienced by the patients may be expressed by gloomy forbidding. Fear of dying, feelings of insecurity, nervousness, insomnia, dizziness, and gastrointestinal disturbances, depression,

tension, sweating, palpitation and light-headedness etc. the moderately anxious person makes a vigilant, attentive watcher who is alert to relatively slight stimulation, and prepared for prompt and vigorous action, Even intense anxiety sometimes can be helpful when it increases one's strength one's speed, courage and endurance in an emergency. Retrospective reports of adults with anxiety disorder suggest that the onset generally occurs in childhood or adolescence. There is a substantial variable across studies. The results of prospective community-based research reveal differential peak periods of onset of specific subtypes of anxiety. Separation anxiety and specific phobia in mid-childhood, overanxious disorder in late adolescence, generalized anxiety disorder in young adulthood and obsessive compulsive disorder in early adulthood. The results of community studies reveal that women have a greater rate of almost all the anxiety disorders.

Depression

Depression is a serious mental disorder that adversely affects moods, energy, interest, sleep, appetite and overall functioning of our human beings. The term depression is often used in scientific terminology, which indicates the preference for qualitative deviation of mood from the norm. So, it is a mood in which there is diminution of drive both physical and mental. It can vary considerably in intensity and it is one of the commonest psychiatric illnesses all over the world. It has been recognized as a clinical syndrome for over 2000 years. Description of the depressive symptoms was initiated into three classes namely, manic-depressive insanity, dementia praecox and paraphrenia. The most common psychiatric disorder probably can be considered as depression. Societal stereotypes and typical clinical features are contributing factors to inadequate diagnosis and treatment. The World Health Organization (WHO) has kept depression in the fourth rank on the list of the most urgent health problems worldwide. It is more than just a low or dysmorphic mood such as feeling sad, blue or down in the dumps. Hence, depression is prevalent all over the life but different studies have shown that the incidence of depression rises sharply during the adolescence period. It has also been found that depression is more prevalent among women than in men. A prolonged period of anger, and frustration in which the patient feels he is making great effort but getting nowhere, is quite a common background to a manic upswing which would in most people cause anxiety, sorrow and depression.

There are many types of situations, which can call forth depression. Perhaps the commonest type of depression is the 'Last Straw Sequence' in which there has been a long period of cumulative stress including perhaps money worries, marital disharmony, problems at work or with the children and during which the patient has

progressively more troubled and strained, until there is some further episode or problem not intrinsically very important and the patient becomes truly depressed. Depression in young people frequently co-occurs with other mental disorders, disruptive behavior or substance abuse disorder as well as with other serious illnesses. This type of mental disorder can take a variety of courses and chronicity with relapse and recurrence is relatively common over the lifespan. These symptoms include persistent sad or irritable mood, loss of interest in activities once enjoyed, significant change in appetite or body weight, difficulty sleeping or oversleeping, physical agitation loss of energy, hopelessness, anxiety psychic anxiety somatic, loss of ability to concentrate, self-depreciation and recurrent thoughts of death or suicide.

Reasons for having high depression under anxiety among the female groups

Women are the pivot of their families and they are the basic unit of psychological change in their societies. They are the first socializing agents for new generations and they can be considered as the important psychic factor in all cultures and civilizations. Their roles and status in society play a very significant part in molding the social system. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had rightly stated that “The status of women indicates the character of the country’. A famous Chinese also opined that if you want to plan for a year to plant wheat, if you wish to plan for ten years grow trees but you want to plan for 100 years to educate your women. Although the U.N. recognizes the equality of women, yet there is a lot of discrimination based on sex, crushing, and poverty, overlaid with a long-standing pattern of discrimination. In India, the status of women has had many ups and downs since the ancient Vedic times to the present day. During the Vedic period, girls were given higher status and facilities in almost all friends but the condition deteriorated from the Brahmin period till now. Due to rapid industrialization, there has been a drastic change in almost every field. One of the most fundamental and remarkable changes is the relative emancipation of women and their participation in activities outside their homes. The changing socio-economic conditions have widened their educational and employment potential. They have provided new avenues of expression. From confining to the four walls of the family to the unrecognized and unrecorded domestic and economic activity women nowadays, have their different roles even in the workplace. Environmental destruction and the increasing scarcity of resources have increased the time women spend on domestic work as well as outside the house. Women of color are the beasts of burden in the world. Their social and economic subordination and the long hours worked affect their health, nutrition and general quality of their lives. With the increase in the number of working women, a new arena has opened in which the violation of human rights and the dignity of women

has been challenged. Women are often terrorized so that they do not assert their rights. Violence against women manifests itself as rape, molestation, stripping, eve-teasing, kidnapping and abduction domestic violence includes wife battering, dowry harassment, and cruelty to women driving them to suffer anxiety and serious depression sometimes leading them to commit suicide. The literature on psychological problems of battered women consistently reports depression, anxiety and somatic problems. A datasheet released by the Department of Women and Child Development of the Ministry of Human Resources Development in 1992-93 on 'Violence against Women' reveals that somewhere in India every 54 minutes a Woman is raped, every 26 minutes a woman is molested, every 51 minutes women is teased, every 10 minutes there is dowry death. Women who have reported violence also reported having the problems with post-traumatic stress disorder, social phobia and depression. Recent studies in India have reported that an increasing number of young women joining the migrant flow to cities, and the report also estimated that more than 75 percent of all migrants in India are women and most of them have been exploited at various levels since time immemorial.

Violence against women may be in different forms. It may be due to violence, child sexual abuse, violence against young women who refuse to reciprocate sexual advances like acid throwing, stalking and absence phone calls, killing for dowry, sexual harassment of working women in office, rape, molestation both in working place and public place, police atrocities on women and custodial violence and According to the study of violence on women in India during 2000 to 2004 years, the cases of rape have increased considerable, the cases of molestation have also molestation have also increased and it has become an important issue in India. Such types of crime and violence against women are not a new subjects of the women of India. However, there is a growing gap between the actual number of crime and their registration as far as women are concerned. The reason may be failure to register cases, bribery of authorities by the criminal, the political connection of criminals; or hesitation on the part of victims to report the crime because of cultures that victimize the women. All the above reasons are enough to arouse anxiety and depression among the victim. Nowadays there is a rapid rise in the number of women committing suicide which is an example of rising anxiety and depression among the women. The greater prevalence of depression in adolescent girls is that they are more socially oriented, and more dependent on positive social relationships than the adolescent boys are. The higher prevalence therefore could be a result of greater vulnerability and combined. Before puberty, boys and girls are equally likely to develop depressive disorders. After the age of 14 years, however females are twice as likely as males to have major depression.

Hereditary and environment have played a great role in developing anxiety and depression among the individuals. Besides the feelings of anxiety and depression, it is also triggered by the things such as malfunctioning of the Central Nervous System, and an imbalance of specific neurochemicals in the brain. Psychosocial causes like life events and stressors and social factors like natural calamities, political instability and economic depression also cause anxiety and depression. Family environment, defective self-concept, and expectations beyond one's ability often lead to discomfort, anxiety and depression.

The Treatment

1. ***Progressive Relaxation Therapy***: It is the first and easiest technique. In this treatment, the anxious person is asked to relax his muscles gradually from head to feet, which will therefore reduce his anxiety.
2. ***Practicing Yoga and Meditation***: It also helps largely to reduce the degree of depression and anxiety. Here, the brain is in complete rest. It means that the mind should be free from any type of problem.
3. ***Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)***: It is a type of including treatment program for the relief of anxiety and depression. Doctors have recommended this treatment and psychiatrists and psychologists often practice it.

More about Treatment

In addition, by protecting the immune system, our vital parts of living can be elongated. Our feelings can be made younger and our physical and mental can be healthy. By providing regular walking and physical exercise, laughter and humors, eating high-nutrient diets such as food rich in antioxidants like vitamins A, C, E, lycopene, Omega-3 fatty acids and folate, music listening, getting enough sound sleep, positive thinking and being optimistic etc. can reduce stress and relieve one from anxiety and depression.

Besides this, one can make use of defense mechanisms to get rid of anxiety and electrical treatment, antidepressants, tranquilizers and hypnosis can be carried out to solve depression. Treatment is to be carried out after a careful study of the case history of the patient. The manifestation of an anxiety state in a person who is otherwise stable and in a person with an anxious personality, if dealt equally need not bring about the same result. Therefore, what is important here is not the mere impression about the mental functioning of the person but a thorough evaluation of the person and his problem to help him to solve his anxiety and depression.

Ways of minimizing anxiety and depression

An anxious and depressed person should be dealt sympathetically. Here the family and society have to play a great role. Generally, a patient does not feel bad if he has to

consult a medical expert for the treatment of his physical ailments but he shows the reluctance to consult a psychiatrist fearing that he would be labeled as mad. Such a narrow thinking has to be rooted out from our society by imparting proper knowledge about the various mental health problems. It is the task of a psychiatrist or psychologist. People of all trades should be given knowledge about mental health and hygiene. Teachers should be trained properly by the psychologists as they are the ones who are to deal directly with the younger generation of the nation. It is essential that every teacher must have some basic knowledge about human psychology. The most effective way of reducing anxiety and depression is by maintaining peace in the state, growth in the economy of every citizen and by providing adequate educational facilities. This task cannot be carried out by the government only but needs the support of the public and various non-governmental organizations.

Conclusions

Anxiety and Depression are the leading cause of disease-related disability among women in the world. Depression affects the way, a person acts and sleeps, the way one feels about oneself and the way one thinks about things. It may be the result of anxiety or vice versa. In order to lead a successful life, one needs to control his or her anxiety and depression. If not, then this may ruin their lives because prolonged depression and anxiety may lead to several other mental health problems and also may cause a threat to social settings. Therefore, the need of an hour is to spread and promote mass awareness about the mental health problems, how to keep a sound body, and mind and how these do or illnesses can be cured.

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