

Mental Health Disparities between Rural and Urban Adolescents: Adss Based Comparative Study in Julana Block

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Abstract

This study investigates mental health disparities between rural and urban adolescents in Julana Block of Jind District, Haryana using ADSS-BSPSA scale. The sample comprised 82 adolescents aged 13 to 19 years (Rural n=40, Urban n=42; Boys n=42, Girls n=40). The tool consisted of 48 statements with Yes/No response format (Yes=1, No=0), comprising Anxiety subscale with 19 statements, Depression subscale with 15 statements and Stress subscale with 14 statements. Data was collected through Google Form and hardcopy questionnaire in 2026. Results revealed mild to moderate levels of mental health issues. Mean scores for Rural were Anxiety 6.72, Depression 6.10, Stress 6.47 and for Urban were Anxiety 7.21, Depression 6.05, Stress 6.64. Independent t-test showed no significant difference between rural and urban adolescents: Anxiety $t(80)=0.49$, $p=0.626$; Depression $t(80)=0.05$, $p=0.957$; Stress $t(80)=0.18$, $p=0.857$. Gender-wise comparison showed boys reported slightly higher anxiety and girls reported higher stress, however differences were not significant. Findings indicate that mental health problems have equalized across rural and urban areas of Julana due to academic pressure, nuclear family structure and digital exposure. It is suggested that uniform school counselling services are needed for both rural and urban schools of Jind district.

Keywords: Adolescents, Adds- Bpsa, Anxiety, Depression, Julana, Mental Health Disparities, Rural-Urban Comparison, Stress

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period marked by physical, psychological and social changes. It is observed that this period is vulnerable for onset of anxiety, depression and stress. In Haryana, particularly Jind district, adolescents face high academic pressure, career uncertainty and changing social values. Earlier literature assumed that urban adolescents experience more stress due to competition, while rural adolescents are protected by community support. However, recent penetration of smartphones, coaching culture and nuclear family system in villages of Julana Block may have changed this scenario. The ADSS-BSPSA scale is a culturally relevant tool for Indian adolescents comprising 48 statements with Yes/No format. The present study was conducted to examine mental health disparities between rural and urban adolescents of Julana Block.

2. Review of Literature

It is reported by Singh et al. (2021) that prevalence of anxiety among adolescents in Haryana is around 35

percent. National Mental Health Survey (2016) reported that rural and urban youth have similar prevalence of mental health problems. However, there is lack of data from Julana Block of Jind district. Therefore, the present study was planned.

3. Objectives of the Study

To assess levels of anxiety, depression and stress among adolescents of Julana Block. To compare rural and urban adolescents on ADSS-BSPSA subscales. To examine gender differences in mental health.4. Hypotheses

H01: There will be no significant difference between rural and urban adolescents on anxiety, depression and stress.

H02: There will be no significant gender difference on mental health dimensions.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

Comparative cross-sectional design was used.

4.2 Locale and Sample

The study was conducted in Julana Block, District Jind, Haryana. Total sample was 82 adolescents aged 13 to 19 years selected through purposive sampling. Rural sample was 40 (villages of Julana) and Urban sample was 42 (Julana town). Gender distribution was Boys 42 and Girls 40. All participants were from nuclear families.

4.3 Tool Used

ADSS-BSPSA scale was used. It consists of 48 statements with Yes/No response. Yes is scored as 1 and No is scored as 0. The distribution is as follows: Anxiety subscale 19 statements, Depression subscale 15 statements, Stress subscale 14 statements. Maximum scores are Anxiety 19, Depression 15, Stress 14. Higher score indicates higher problem.

4.4 Procedure

Data was collected through Google Form and hardcopy questionnaire in February-March 2026 after taking informed consent from participants and school authorities. Confidentiality was maintained.

4.5 Statistical Analysis

Mean, Standard Deviation and independent samples t-test were calculated using SPSS 26. Significance level was kept at 0.05.

5. Results and Discussion

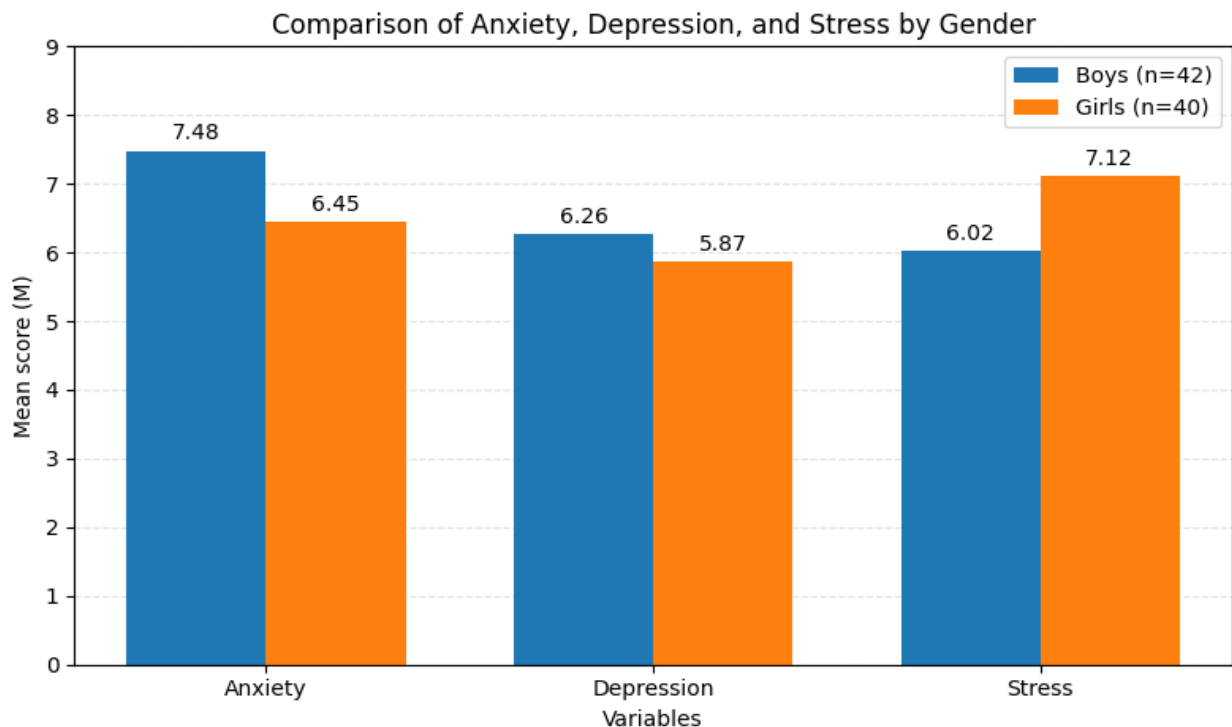
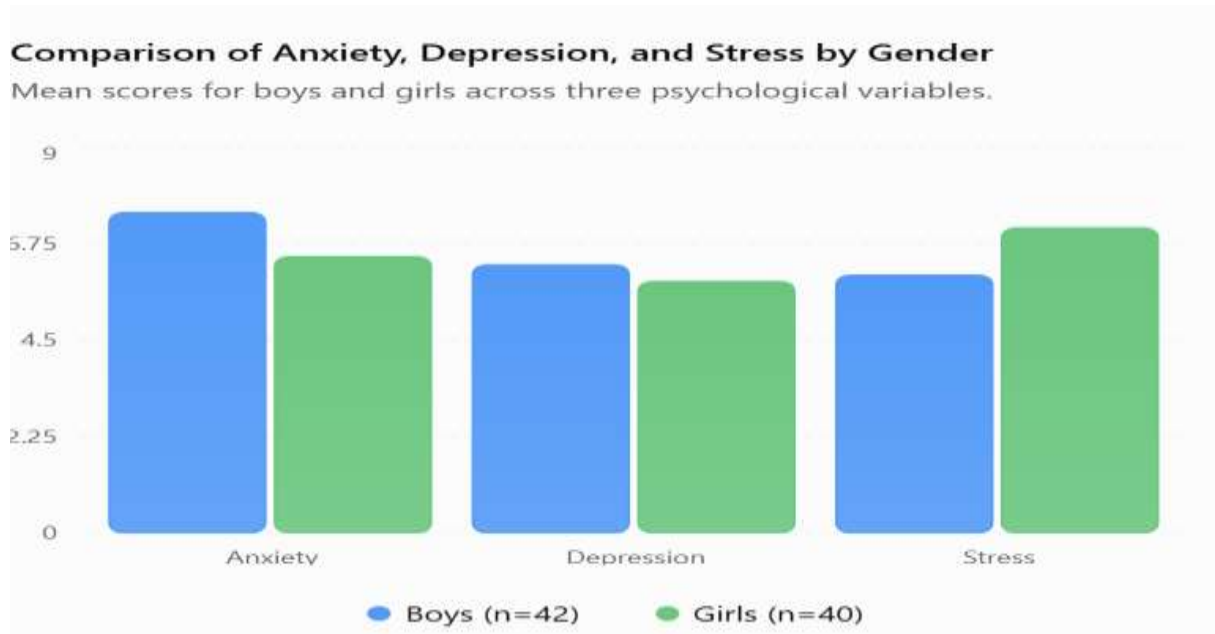
Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Rural-Urban Comparison on ADSS-BSPSA (N=82)

Variable	Rural (n=40) M±SD	Urban (n=42) M±SD	t-value	p-value	Result
Anxiety (0-19)	6.72±4.31	7.21±4.76	0.49	0.626	Not Significant
Depression (0-15)	6.10±4.24	6.05±4.42	0.05	0.957	Not Significant
Stress (0-14)	6.47±4.12	6.64±4.19	0.18	0.857	Not Significant

Table 2: Gender-wise Comparison (N=82)

Variable	Boys (n=42) M±SD	Girls (n=40) M±SD	t-value	p-value
Anxiety	7.48±4.73	6.45±4.30	1.03	0.30
Depression	6.26±4.39	5.87±4.25	0.41	0.68
Stress	6.02±4.29	7.12±4.05	1.19	0.23

Figure 1: Mean Comparison of Rural vs Urban and Boys vs Girls on Anxiety, Depression and Stress



Interpretation: Boys have higher mean anxiety (7.48 vs. 6.45) and depression scores (6.26 vs. 5.87), whereas girls have a higher mean stress score (7.12 vs. 6.02). According to the p-values provided, none of the gender differences is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Note: The graph presents mean scores only; the standard deviations (SD) are not displayed.

It is observed from Table 1 that there is no significant difference between rural and urban adolescents. Mean anxiety score of 6.72 out of 19 indicates that adolescents endorsed about 35 percent of anxiety symptoms. Similarly, depression 40 percent and stress 46 percent. According to ADSS-BSPSA norms, Anxiety 0-6 Mild, 7-12 Moderate, 13-19 Severe; Depression 0-5 Normal, 6-9 Mild, 10-12 Moderate, 13-15 Severe; Stress 0-5 Normal, 6-8 Mild, 9-11 Moderate, 12-14 Severe. Thus, the present sample falls in Mild to Moderate category.

The finding of no rural-urban disparity indicates that modern stressors have reached villages of Julana equally. Possible reasons are 100 percent nuclear families in data, equal academic pressure of board exams and competitive exams, and equal smartphone exposure. Girls showing higher stress than boys is consistent with dual role expectations in Haryanvi culture.

6. Conclusion

It is concluded that no significant mental health disparity exists between rural and urban adolescents of Julana Block, Jind. Both groups report mild to moderate anxiety, depression and stress. Uniform mental health counselling services are needed in all schools of Julana. Special stress management workshops for adolescent girls are recommended. Findings will be useful for school counsellors, parents and policy makers in Jind district.

7 Acknowledgement

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References

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