Depression Among Female Adolescents: An Overview

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Abstract. The rise of significant mental health distress in teenage girls, known as depression, is now a notable issue, impacting their general state of being, performance in academics, and interactions within their social circles. The aim of this overview is to synthesize existing research on depression counseling treatment strategies specifically tailored for female adolescents. A comprehensive search of electronic databases was conducted, resulting in the inclusion of 12 relevant studies published between 1988 and 2015. The overview highlights various counseling approaches, therapeutic interventions, and preventive measures that have been explored in different literatures. The findings underscore the significance of tailored approaches, involving School-Based Intervention, Interpersonal Therapy, as well as Family-Based Interventions, in addressing the distinctive needs and challenges faced by adolescent females. The overview also calls for further research and innovative strategies to enhance the reach and impact of depression counseling interventions for female adolescents.

Keywords: Depression; Adolescents; Teen pressures; Adolescent Females.

1. Introduction

In recent times, a notable mental health issue has arisen concerning teenagers, especially girls, which is depression. The World Health Organization (WHO) has calculated that about 10-20% of adolescents worldwide undergo mental health problems, and among these, depression stands out as one of the prevailing conditions impacting this demographic. Adolescence is a crucial phase characterized by significant shifts in both emotions and thinking processes, rendering it vulnerable to the emergence and continuation of feelings associated with depression. The impact of depression on the lives of female adolescents is particularly concerning due to its potential long-term consequences. Depression not only affects their psychological well-being but also interferes with their academic performance, social interactions, interpersonal development, and overall quality of life. Moreover, untreated depression during adolescence can lead to a higher risk of recurrent episodes, chronicity, and the development of other mental health disorders in adulthood.

Emphasis of this overview will be placed on understanding the specific factors that contribute to depression in female adolescents, such as hormonal changes, body image concerns, societal expectations, interpersonal relationships, and cultural influences. By gaining a deeper understanding of these factors, it becomes possible to develop tailored and effective counseling interventions that address the unique needs and challenges faced by female adolescents. This overview will also focus on exploring existing research and evidence-based practices related to depression counseling for female adolescents. By examining the current body of knowledge, this overview seeks to identify effective interventions, therapeutic approaches, and strategies that promote positive outcomes in the treatment of depression among female adolescents, approaches such as school-based intervention, interpersonal therapy, and family-based intervention will be discussed in this overview. Ultimately, this overview aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on depression counseling treatment strategies for female adolescents. By identifying evidence-based practices and understanding the risky factors that contribute to depression, mental health practitioners can enhance their ability to provide services to the targeted population. The outcomes of this analysis will establish the groundwork for upcoming studies and steer the creation of specialized therapeutic methods that enable young women to conquer depression and pursue satisfying lifestyles.

2. Methods

2.1. Research Criteria

In this overview, relevant scholarly articles, empirical studies, and research papers addressing depression counseling treatment strategies for female adolescents were identified and selected. The quality and credibility of the selected literature were evaluated by searching “peer reviewed articles”. The findings from the selected studies were analyzed and synthesized to identify effective depression counseling treatment strategies for female adolescents. Most importantly, this overview identified research gaps and proposed future directions for enhancing depression counseling interventions for female adolescents.

2.2. Search Strategy

Relevant databases, such as PubMed, PsycINFO, and ERIC, were selected to retrieve literature from reputable sources in the fields of psychology, counseling, and adolescent health. A combination of controlled vocabulary and keywords was used to capture relevant articles. Key terms included "depression counseling," "treatment strategies," "female adolescents," and related variations. Studies published between 1988 and 2015 were included to ensure the latest information. English-language articles that focused on depression counseling interventions for female adolescents were considered, and studies primarily focusing on other populations or mental health conditions were excluded.

2.3. Data Extraction and Analysis

The findings from the selected studies were analyzed and synthesized using a thematic approach. Common themes and patterns related to effective depression counseling treatment strategies for female adolescents were identified and grouped accordingly.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. School-Based Intervention

The overview mainly focuses on analyzing the universal subtype of the school-based intervention out of the three subtypes distinguished by Neil and Christensen. [1]. the primary objective of the universal program is to offer mental health support to every adolescent student in order to enhance their overall well-being as well as for adolescent females. The selective programs, on the other hand, target individuals who have a higher likelihood of developing depression due to specific risk factors like trauma, familial suicide, or parental divorce. The indicated programs are specifically designed for students who display early signs of depression. Certain universal programs that have been extensively debated possess their own set of advantages and disadvantages. The school administration tends to favor universal programs in order to circumvent the associated stigmas and time constraints that come with the other programs. This inclination towards universal programs is a limitation when it comes to implementing an indicated intervention, in addition to the limited availability of resources [2].

Mental health promotion efforts often encounter challenges such as stigma, limited time availability, finding appropriate locations, and more. However, these obstacles can be notably minimized when implemented within a school environment [3]. Schools hold great potential as a favorable setting for implementing interventions based on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Cognitive-behavioral therapy's efficacy in symptom reduction has been established through universal trials involving high-risk youth populations [4].

3.2. Family-Based intervention

Family-oriented approaches have shown efficacy in the treatment of adolescents experiencing depression as well as adolescent females according to the strategies that Lewis et al have proved to

be effective in their research [5]. Studies suggest that teenagers who are depressed, particularly girls, and also face challenges in their relationships with their parents, tend to show reduced receptiveness to individualized therapeutic interventions [6]. Cohort investigations have supplied significant proof connecting insufficient parent-child interactions, elevated familial disputes, insufficient family bonds, and disengagement from family engagements to a heightened susceptibility to experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety. In light of these discoveries, professionals have continuously advocated for the creation of initiatives aimed at prevention and early interference. These initiatives should emphasize aspects related to families, like assisting parents in establishing a nurturing and encouraging household atmosphere, enacting suitable parental supervision, and employing authoritative parenting approaches during the adolescent phase. Another significant benefit of family-based interventions is that they offer a pathway for engaging reluctant young individuals who may be hesitant to acknowledge their problems or seek help. In such instances, when other members of the family are present during the intervention and exhibit a willingness to transform, they can progressively inspire the involvement of other family members who are also impacted [5].

3.3. Interpersonal Therapy

Studies have highlighted the significance of the connection between interpersonal conflict and depression, especially in adolescents. Young individuals experiencing depression display behavior that harms their relationships with others, thus increasing the risk of depressive symptoms [7]. Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) stands as a firmly established psychological treatment technique that concentrates on addressing issues within personal relationships and enhancing social interactions to alleviate symptoms of depression. This method has demonstrated effectiveness in treating depression among adolescents, including young females. IPT commonly centers around four main categories of interpersonal challenges associated with potential connections to depression [8]. These include dealing with grief from a significant loss, navigating shifts in roles and responsibilities, managing conflicts and miscommunications with family, friends, or peers, and grappling with difficulties in establishing and sustaining relationships. This can lead adolescents to experience feelings of depression. Adolescents who were treated by IPT demonstrated considerable reductions in symptoms and enhanced overall functioning. Statistics exhibited that IPT treated adolescents, including adolescent females, significantly improved functioning based on the Children's Global Assessment Scale, as well as enhanced social functioning according to the Social Adjustment Scale-Self-Report. Moreover, these individuals experienced notably greater clinical improvement and a significant reduction in clinical severity, as indicated by the Clinical Global Impressions scale [9]. Adolescents who underwent IPT treatment indicated a lower prevalence of depression diagnoses compared to those who received standard care. The research also offered precise indications of the effectiveness of IPT as a remedy for adolescents and adolescent females experiencing subthreshold depression [7, 10].

3.4. Various Results Depend on Various Methods

Family-based interventions have demonstrated their efficacy, particularly in instances where family dynamics play a substantial role in contributing to an adolescent's depression. By actively engaging with and tackling these intricate familial matters head-on, these interventions can facilitate the cultivation of a positive and harmonious family atmosphere. This proactive approach not only serves to mitigate the immediate depressive symptoms but also equips the adolescent with enhanced coping mechanisms, thereby fortifying their emotional resilience. In a parallel vein, school-based interventions emerge as a beacon of support for adolescents entangled in the intricate web of academic stressors, bullying, or the labyrinthine realm of social challenges endemic to the scholastic environment. By orchestrating a targeted response to these challenges, these interventions effectively carve out a haven of understanding and encouragement within the school's milieu. In doing so, they foster an environment conducive to scholastic achievement and personal growth, ultimately leading to an amelioration in both academic performance and the adolescent's sense of social belonging.

Interpersonal therapy steps into the limelight for those individuals whose depression is intricately interwoven with interpersonal conflicts or the thorny thicket of relationship issues. By meticulously delving into these specific concerns, this therapeutic approach lays the groundwork for an extensive overhaul of the individual's relational landscape. Notably, this includes the development of healthier relationship dynamics, the refinement of communication skills, and a discernible reduction in the weight of depressive symptoms. Central to the success of any intervention is its tailored alignment with the unique needs and circumstances of the individual. This personalized strategy remains pivotal in garnering the most favorable outcomes. Consequently, enlisting the expertise of mental health professionals is a cardinal necessity. Their adeptness in evaluating the intricate tapestry of each case ensures the strategic selection of an intervention approach, promising a journey towards holistic well-being and emotional equipoise.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this overview focused on exploring the various counseling treatment strategies for female adolescents with depression. Additionally, this overview underscores the importance of early detection, comprehensive assessment, and individualized treatment plans for female adolescents with depression. The results of the examined research provide insights into the intricacies of depression within this particular group and underscore the significance of customized strategies to meet their distinct requirements. In the overview, the significance of a holistic and multidimensional approach to depression counseling was highlighted. Integrating family-based intervention and school-based interventions alongside individual counseling sessions can contribute to comprehensive and effective treatment plans for female adolescents with depression. By implementing these interventions, mental health professionals can make significant strides in supporting the well-being and recovery of female adolescents struggling with depression.

However, despite the growing body of research in studying depressive adolescent females, several limitations were identified, including a lack of diverse samples, limited longitudinal studies, and a need for further investigation into the specific or multicultural factors that contribute to depression among female adolescents. Future research should aim to address these gaps to enhance the understanding of the most effective treatment strategies for this population. Overall, this overview underscores the importance of early detection, comprehensive assessment, and individualized treatment plans for female adolescents with depression. By implementing evidence-based counseling strategies such as school-based intervention, IPT, and family-based interventions can make significant strides in supporting the well-being and recovery of female adolescents who are struggling with depression.

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