

Effects and Prevalence of Depression and Anxiety on University of Dayton Upperclassmen Students

By: Charles Bova, Catherine Fay, Grace Lewis

Advisor: Claire Wilt, MDN, RD, LD

¹DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SPORT SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON, OH

INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of depression and anxiety has been found to range between 10-30% of college students for both depression and anxiety. This study aims to discover the prevalence of depression and anxiety amongst the upperclassmen at the University of Dayton and what symptoms they predominantly exhibit. The assumption was that upperclassmen will be happier because they are starting to discover their life's purpose. However, anxiety may increase due to the need to decide upon a plan for their future.

METHODS

- A google forms 13 question survey was created.
- The anonymous survey was distributed to 56 University of Dayton upperclassmen (third & fourth year).
- Data was collected and analyzed using a t-test as a statistical measure.

RESULTS

- Fewer people feel high ratings of depression versus those that feel lower ratings. Most people indicate a degree of depression that lies between “never” and “frequently,” skewed slightly towards “never.”
- Most participants reported that they were “happy”, however 76.8% of the participants have experienced symptoms of anxiety in the recent weeks
- **Happiness vs. Depression:** These variables appear to have a strong inverse relationship. Depression decreases as happiness increases. A t-test indicated a correlation coefficient of 1.0 between these two variables, so there is a strong negative correlation present between happiness and depression
- **Happiness vs. Anxiety:** There is a positive correlation between happiness and anxiety. A t-test indicated that there was a correlation coefficient of 1.0 between happiness and anxiety, so these variables have a strong positive correlation. Happiness increases alongside anxiety in upperclassmen students at the University of Dayton.

Table 1.1

Number of Ratings vs. Anxiety Scale

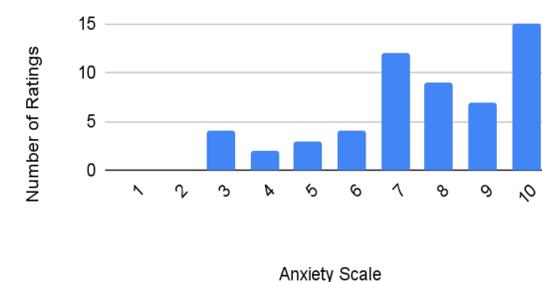


Table 1.2

Number of Ratings vs. Depression Scale

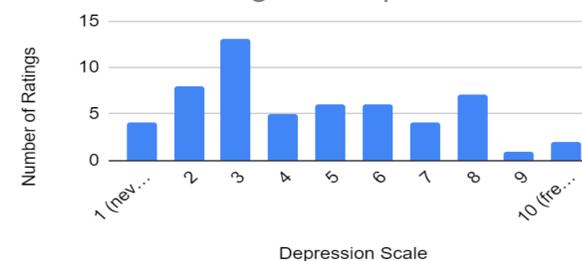
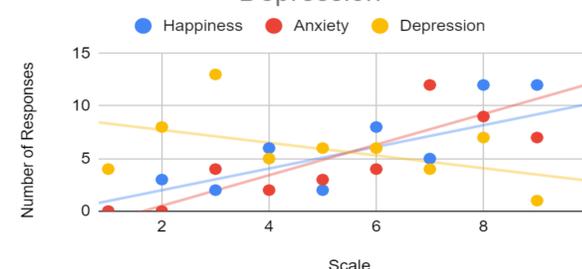


Figure 1.1

Correlation Between Happiness, Anxiety, and Depression



CONCLUSIONS

After data collection and analysis, it was found that upperclassmen are more often happy than depressed. Results also indicated that upperclassmen experienced increased anxiety with increased happiness. The assumption that upperclassmen would be happier showed to be true through the results. This could be correlated with comfortability with the University and with their social experiences on campus. The assumption that upperclassmen's anxiety would increase also appears to be accurate. Upperclassmen responded through the survey that their social life and the anxiety of moving on after college adds more stress on their daily lives.

REFERENCES

1. McNealy, K. R., & Lombardero, A. (2019). Somatic presentation of mental health concerns, stigma, and mental health treatment engagement among college students. *Journal of American College Health*, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2019.1590372>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our advisor, Professor Claire Wilt, for helping us with this research. Thank you to those who participated in the study as well.