

Youths' Awareness to Depression – “Sonona” in Mbeya Region

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Introduction

Depression “SONONA” is a condition whereby an individual loses interest in several activities. It is caused by biological, environmental, social factors, economic and psychological factors. In the world less than 10% receive treatment to depression this is due to others who have the disorder are too often misdiagnosed and prescribed and in most cases depression is taken as a minor disease than Malaria and typhoid, therefore continuing to be ignored by elders and youths.

Our aim is to make the youth in Mbeya aware of depression, its effects and how to overcome it, because depression is elevating to be the biggest problem in our society as it holds more than 300 million victims of all ages in the WHO records shows that 800,000 people die due to suicide every year as a result of depression at ages ranging 15-29 year olds of which even Mbeya has youths who fall in this category.



Method

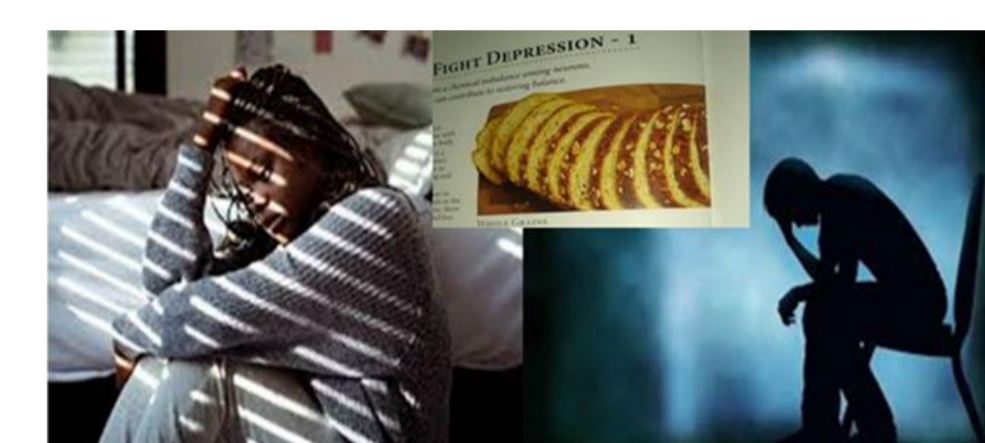
Focus group discussions, interviews and Questions were organized in questionnaires and they were provided to 110 Pandahill Students of advanced level 60 from form five and 50 from form six so as to get their awareness on depression through questions like:

- 1) If they know the meaning of depression.
- 2) The habits they might have noticed to a person with depression.
- 3) Which age and sex is highly affected by depression and
- 4) The means which they use to prevent depression.

We applied focus group discussions and interviews because we thought that, this technique could give us information with details as the respondents were free to the interviewer through conversation.

We applied questionnaires because we wished to get personal and even private information from individuals and not as a group.

We also had literature reviews on depression so that we could see its extent and on how it is dealt with from different places worldwide as shown in the right hand picture.



Results

Despite of the general unawareness of the depression stages among youths in Mbeya region upon the analysis we made on tools above, surprising results emerged from different focus group discussions case studies and interviews from students who had little experience on depressed people, they could share with us their experiences on stages that:

The group of youths is the ones which are mostly affected by depression by 55% and 9% for children and this is due to issues like irresponsible relationships in academics, failure in studies and even family matters as shown in the right hand simple percentage pie chart.

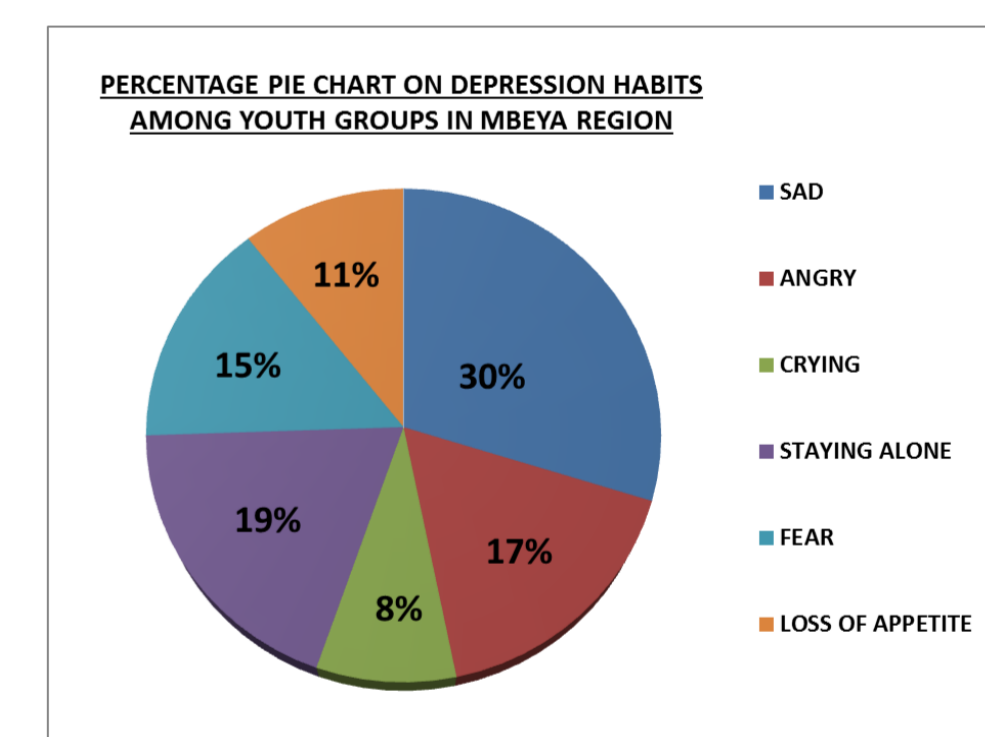
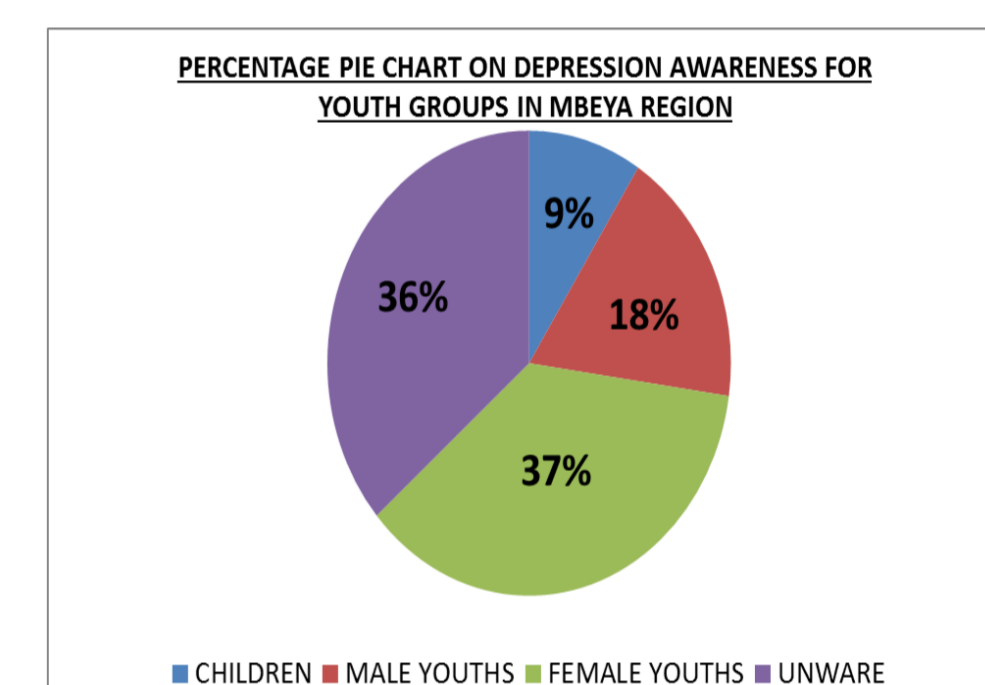
On responding to the features or habits which individuals feel during depression is that:

20% of youths were not aware on what to do during depression moments; however they could at least exhibit external features of the affected victims such as becoming Sad, Angry, Staying alone, losing concentration in academics and socialization and therefore ending up at doing things which are illegal like committing suicide and even giving up in academics and life in general.

Within this 55%; 37% of girls are highly affected because they are taken as inferior and they claim to not having the right to do what they want as boys do, and therefore getting into early stages of depression without their awareness among themselves, parents and teachers.

Since the female youths have been seen to be highly affected by depression through sexual harassments, bitten, oppression, segregation, despised, discriminated, ignored and disvalued, and in turn they take it as easy and become calm as part of their human right with a hope it will dissolve naturally and culturally, which proves that even in the group of unaware individuals, female youths might have greater percentage as compared to male youths.

In spite of being more affected by depression, female students youths are more capable and have better ways of dealing with depression at early stages by: keeping calm, staying alone so as to refresh the mind, Singing, participating in hygiene activities like washing clothes, Sharing challenging stories with one another, crying, listening to music and supporting one another



Conclusions

When the society keeps on ignoring depression even at early stages, it will reach the stage that it will become a monster which will continue to affect youth and the society in general through poverty since there will be decrease in labor force and involvement of drug abuse among the youths! It is only through education this problem can be prevented by elders, peer groups with good will and psychiatrists who can at least realize the factors such as relationship matters and genetics or if an individual has relatives those suffer depression, childhood trauma or accidents and later they may suggest means of preventing such as getting cultured to foods that may prevent depression, having right relationship, using anti-depressants drugs and psychotherapy with specialists etc.

As the study proceeds, we hope to come up with the early facial expression awareness on the signal of depression and way forward, before it is critical, because the patient and relatives might not be aware if the monster is within their surroundings.

Acknowledgments

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